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PROCEEDINGS

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF

~~76~~

The National Civil-Service Reform League

HELD AT

NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND, AUGUST 2, 1882

WITH THE ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

HON. GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS



NEW YORK

PUBLISHED FOR THE

NATIONAL CIVIL-SERVICE REFORM LEAGUE

BY

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1882

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Annual Meeting.

NATIONAL CIVIL-SERVICE REFORM LEAGUE.

AUGUST 2, 1882.

In accordance with the provisions of the constitution and pursuant to call duly issued, the annual meeting of the League was convened at the Ocean House, at Newport, Rhode Island, August 2, 1882, at 12 M., the Hon. George William Curtis presiding.

The following gentlemen among others were present :

Boston, Mass. A. T. Sinclair, Bancroft C. Davis, Arthur Hobart, George G. Crocker, Henry H. Sprague, Causten Browne, Edwin L. Sprague, Augustus Hemenway.

Worcester, Mass. James Green.

Cambridge, Mass. Chas. Theo. Russell, Chas. Theo. Russell, Jr., William W. Vaughan, Morrill Wyman, Jr., James Russell Reed, George V. Leverett.

Malden, Mass. Wm. B. de las Casas.

Northampton, Mass. Henry M. Tyler, John E. Hammond.

Newton, Mass. Henry Lambert, James P. Tolman, John W. Carter, F. F. Raymond, 2d.

Wollaston, Mass. Josiah Quincy, Jr.

Hartford, Conn. Edward D. Robbins.

Providence, Rhode Island. L. F. C. Garvin, Allen B. Lincoln.

Newport, Rhode Island. Charles W. Wendt .

New York. Silas W. Burt, Ira Bursley, Elial F. Hall, Everett P. Wheeler, John Jay, Dorman B. Eaton, George Haven Putnam, Charles Collins, Carl Schurz, Orlando B. Potter, George William Curtis, William Cary Sanger, William Potts.

• Brooklyn, N. Y. Frederic Cromwell, Thomas S. Moore, John M. Comstock.

Buffalo, N. Y. Henry A. Richmond, Sherman S. Rogers, George H. Ball.

Philadelphia, Pa. J. Andrews Harris, W. W. Montgomery, Morton P. Henry, J. G. Rosengarten, Charles Wheeler.

Baltimore, Md. Charles J. Bonaparte, J. Hall Pleasants, George B. Cole, W. H. Baldwin, Jr., Geo. S. Brown.

Ann Arbor, Mich. Charles Kendall Adams.

St. Louis, Mo. George E. Leighton, Thomas T. Gantt.

San Francisco, Cal. Isaac Hecht.

Letters of regret for inability to attend were received from Moorfield Storey, Charles Codman, Henry Hitchcock, William Simes, Frederick W. Whitridge, and others.

The following Associations were represented:

Boston, Mass., Brooklyn, N. Y., Buffalo, N. Y., California, Cambridge, Mass., Cincinnati, O., Connecticut, Malden, Mass., Maryland, Missouri, Morristown, N. J., Newton, Mass., New York, Northampton, Mass., Orange, N. J., Philadelphia, Pa., Rhode Island, University of Michigan, Willimantic, Conn., Wollaston, Mass.

The following Associations were not directly represented :

Chicago, Ill., Cleveland, O., Hartford, Conn., Lawrence, Kan., Louisville, Ky., Madison, Wis., Milwaukee, Wis., New Haven, Conn., New Orleans, La., Pittsburgh, Pa., Quincy, Mass., Springfield, Mass.

On taking the chair the President addressed the meeting as follows :

A YEAR OF REFORM.

ADDRESS BY GEO. WM. CURTIS.

In welcoming you to the first annual meeting of the National Civil-Service Reform League, I congratulate you upon the bright prospects of the cause. We may well call the last year the year of national awakening upon the subject. After a desultory debate, constantly increasing in interest and importance and extending through 15 years, or since the first report of Mr. Jenckes in 1867, the assassination of President Garfield, like a sudden flash of electric light, revealed the nature and the peril of the spoils system to the whole country. The popular verdict upon that tragical event was prompt and just. Except for a factional quarrel, produced wholly by the strife for patronage or spoils, the President would not have been murdered. His death has fixed general public attention upon the character and tendency of abuses of administration inherent in the present system of appointment and removal in the subordinate civil service, abuses which have

been rapidly developed since the War. This awakening of interest is half the victory. For when once the shrewd and good-natured American mind clearly perceives a political evil, its correction has already begun.

No prominent public man in the country saw the danger of the spoils system more plainly than the late President. No man felt more deeply the necessity of reform, and in his inaugural address he announced his intention of asking Congress to fix the tenure of the minor offices and to prescribe the grounds of removal. His position, however, was one of extreme difficulty. He was a strong partisan, and he had been elected by a party in which, as in both the great parties, the evil tradition was very powerful. The general opinion of his party would not have supported a radical reform, as the experience of his predecessor had shown, and his official action was closely restrained by the Constitution. The President felt, doubtless, that he held power in trust for a party, and for a general policy upon which it was agreed, and that he was bound in honor not to imperil that policy. He knew, indeed, that the convention which nominated him, like previous conventions of all parties had adopted a declaration of reform. But he knew also the significance of such declarations. They are meant to be polite bows to the whims of notional brethren which it is hoped will pacify them without committing the party. Robert Owen said that when he waited on Prince Metternich to unfold to him his scheme of a new civilization, the prince listened attentively, shook his head gravely, and remarked impressively, "Mr. Owen, your interesting suggestions merit the most serious attention,"—and then rang for the servant to show the philanthropist the door.

But President Garfield shared the conviction to which the platform bowed. He knew that it was a deep and growing sentiment. He was no more afraid of the word reformer than of the word patriot, and he knew also when the word reform is synonymous with the truest patriotism. Trusting his countrymen, he foresaw their approval and support of a vigorous reform of abuses. A strong partisan, he was yet a stronger man, and a strong man uses a party and is not used by it. Americans love vigor and courage. That is the sole secret of Andrew Jackson's popularity. Garfield knew and had proved, both in military and political life, that a brave leader makes brave followers, and that the men who complacently call themselves practical statesmen are generally cowardly political hucksters. With all his amiability and love of peace, his sense of duty was supreme and he was at heart a hero. Doubtless his temperament, his sense of party necessity, and the conditions of the chief executive office, would have made his action inconsistent. But doubtless, also, his strong hand would have brought the ship to the true course, even had he been unable to bring her into port.

"Death takes us by surprise,
And stays our hurrying feet;
The great design unfinished lies—
Our lives are incomplete."

President Arthur, who succeeded Garfield, brought to the duties of the office the same amiable temper and a sincere patriotism. But he was politically identified with the spoils system, and he undoubtedly honestly regarded it as the basis of effective party organization. Yet that he was deeply impressed by the demand for reform and that he was aware of its increasing significance is

shown by his first message to Congress, in which he discusses the subject more elaborately than any of his predecessors. His arguments against the competitive system of minor appointment prove that in his judgment it had become a serious public question. He pledged his earnest support to it, should Congress establish it, and in any event he urgently recommended an appropriation of \$25,000 to enforce section 1753 of the Revised Statutes, the section under which the present Civil-Service Commission was established, of which Mr. Eaton is chairman; and he further pledged himself to observe the provisions of the law both in letter and spirit. The competitive system which had been recommended in pursuance of that law had been successfully applied under the Administration of President Hayes to appointments in the Interior Department and in the two chief offices of their kind in the country, the Custom-House and Post-Office in New York; and the system established in those two offices has not yet been disturbed under the present Administration. But it has not been extended elsewhere, nor has the general course of the Administration shown that it approves the reformed system.

On the 7th of July, Mr. Butterworth of Ohio made a statement in the House of Representatives in regard to executive appointments and removals, which is understood to be official. From this statement it appears that during the nine months of his official term the President has made 874 appointments and 49 removals. Assuming the removals to have been made for legitimate cause, such as dishonesty, incompetency, negligence, or similar reasons, there have been 825 appointments to vacancies arising from expiration of the term. It is obviously a cardinal principle of efficient service that the mere expiration of a term shall not be equivalent to

dismissal. Under a system of appointment by favor, such an understanding would result in concentrating the energy and time of an incumbent not upon the duties of his place but upon securing reappointment. The mere expiration of term cannot affect the incumbent's qualifications. Not to reappoint an honest and competent officer to a position which is in no sense whatever a political position is virtually to remove him. Mr. Butterworth's figures show that of 825 officers whose terms, generally of four years, have expired, the President has reappointed 428 and has not reappointed 397. The conclusion from this authoritative statement is inevitable. Nearly half of the late incumbents have not been reappointed. Either, therefore, half of the number were unfit for their places, or 397 out of 825 officers being fit for their places, have been practically removed. If the former supposition be correct, that nearly half of the officers appointed under the present system are found at the end of a few years to be unfit for their places, it is a conclusive condemnation of that system of appointment as utterly inadequate and disgraceful. Or, if the latter supposition be correct, and 397 out of 825 officers have been removed, not because they are unfit, obviously some other reason than the welfare of the service has caused the removals. In either case by the authoritative showing of Mr. Butterworth, the present system stands condemned either as admitting nearly 50 per cent. of unfit officers into the service, or as displacing for political or personal or private reasons the same proportion of honest and efficient public servants.

All of these officers, you will observe, are of a grade to whose appointment the consent of the Senate is necessary. Every one of them has more or less dependents, and if there be an average

number of 10 dependents upon each officer, the 397 who have been removed, become at once nearly 4,000 persons. Now changes in important offices cannot be made even from one honest incumbent to another without serious loss to the public, arising from the inexperience of the new officer. Rotation in such offices for the sake of rotation is, generally, ravage of the public treasury. An official report on the Internal Revenue Department some years since, showed that one instance of the political substitution of an inexperienced for an experienced officer, cost the country in a single district \$300,000 in the falling off of the revenue. The President said in his letter of acceptance of the nomination to the Vice-Presidency and repeated in his message to Congress that the tenure of office should be stable, and that in the main the public business should be conducted upon the general principles that regulate private business. Assuming his fidelity to the principle he has announced, he has found it necessary to dismiss nearly 50 per cent. of the officers whose terms had expired. The public loss necessarily resulting from such a vast proportion of dismissals is evident. No great private business would tolerate such changes. The President's action upon the principles that he has laid down proves incontestibly the absolute necessity of radical reform.

During the year, at the opening of the session of Congress, the late Postmaster-General—and a more efficient and experienced officer has never presided over that Department—bore testimony to this necessity. The Postmaster-General is the head of the great patronage department of the Government. The late incumbent had had long experience in high positions in the postal service. He had tested the reformed system, and he declared without qualification the urgent desirability of its adoption. On the 6th of

December, Mr. Pendleton introduced again into the Senate the bill which bears his name, and on the 24th of January, Mr. Dawes brought in another bill looking to the same general result of substituting merit for favor in minor appointments. Mr. Pendleton introduced also a bill prohibiting political assessments. All the bills were referred to a committee of which Mr. Hawley is chairman. Under his energetic direction the committee collected a vast store of valuable information, among which I may mention as of especial importance the testimony of Postmaster Pearson and of Naval Officer Burt, describing in the clearest and most satisfactory manner all the details and results of the reformed methods pursued in the New York Custom-House and Post-Office. This testimony is an ample and conclusive refutation from official experience of the merely theoretical, sentimental and ignorant assertions made in Congress respecting the nature and operations of the reformed system. On the 15th of May the committee reported the Pendleton bill, somewhat amended, to the Senate. The report was a concise statement of the salient evils of the spoils system and a sketch of the movement for reform, and the appendix contained all the testimony taken by the committee. Senator Dawes for the minority dissented from the report in favor of his own bill. As yet there has been no general debate and no action upon the subject in the Senate. But the interest of the committee and the speeches of Senators Pendleton and Dawes agreeing in their general view of the evil and of the objects to be sought by reform, and differing only upon details of method, show, I hope, that the friends of reform will not be divided in the moment of action.

In the House of Representatives the treatment of the subject shows how ludicrously unconscious Members of Congress may be

of the tendency and force of public opinion. At the beginning of the session a select committee on reform in the civil service was appointed. After deliberating several months this committee reported a bill to enlarge the powers and duties of the Department of Agriculture. But to reform in the civil service, although carefully-drawn bills were referred to it, the select committee furnished only the contemptuous sneers of some of its own members. Early in the session, Mr. Willis, of Kentucky, introduced a bill prohibiting political assessments, which in the last days of the session he advocated in a singularly lively and effective speech. The question indeed was not considered until the final debate upon the Sundry Civil Appropriation bill. The President's party controls the House. The President had asked "urgently" for an appropriation of \$25,000 for the Civil-Service Commission. The appropriation bill was at last reported. The sum of \$1,000 was allowed for "lycopodium," \$75,000 for the observation of the transit of Venus; \$115,000 for "the introduction of gourami and other useful fish foods;" \$180,000 for the magnetic map of Western North America. Various grants of the bill amounted to \$23,680,-865, but that sum did not include a single dollar of the \$25,000 which the President had "urgently" recommended to his party friends for the purpose of promoting administrative reform. During the general debate in committee of the whole, various amendments looking to that end were offered by the opposition, and they were lost. At length an amendment appropriating the specific sum asked by the President was moved by one of his party friends. It was contemptuously opposed by others whose sneers served only to reveal their amusing and complete ignorance of the subject upon which they were legislating, and the President's party refused

his request. The amendment was renewed by a political opponent of the President and for a sum of \$15,000. The President's party laughed and jeered. But after ridiculing, as well as they could, a subject which is felt by the most intelligent and patriotic citizens to be of the highest importance, the President's party contemptuously permitted a grant of three-fifths of the pittance for which he had "urgently" asked. This is the sole action of the House of Representatives upon this subject. This is the record upon which the leaders of the dominant party think it wise to go to the country which is thoroughly alive to the necessity of reform. I trust that this National League will recommend to all the Civil-Service Reform Associations in the country to ascertain the position of every candidate for Congress in their several states upon this question, to announce that position to the voters plainly, and to urge every citizen who desires reform to support, without regard to his party sympathy, only those candidates whom he believes to be honestly resolved to secure it.

In singular contrast with the amazing apathy and ribaldry of Congress, the petitions that were presented from every part of the country, the organization of reform associations, and the wide discussion in the press showed the general and increasing interest of the public mind in the question. On the 27th of December, 1881, the New York Association called the attention of the Secretary of the Treasury to the violation by Gen. N. M. Curtis, an employee of the Government, and Treasurer of the New York Republican Committee, of the law which prohibits certain employees of the Government, from asking, giving to, or receiving from certain other employees money for political purposes. The Secretary replied that Gen. Curtis's employment would cease with the month of Febru-

ary, and that without deciding the question of misdemeanor he had referred the papers to the District Attorney. Upon evidence furnished by the Association, an indictment was drawn, but owing to the inability of the District Attorney to ascertain the name of Gen. Curtis it was quashed. The Association pressed for a new indictment, and after an effort of Gen. Curtis's counsel to evade the issue by trivial and technical excuses, Gen. Curtis was convicted in the United States Circuit Court on the 25th of May. His counsel appealed in arrest of judgment, upon the ground of the unconstitutionality of the law. But on the 20th of July the full bench of the Circuit Court of the United States, by a unanimous opinion, lucidly and conclusively affirmed the constitutionality of the law, and the question will be now carried to the Supreme Court.

This trial and the consequent general discussion by the press exposed the gross wrong and peril of party political assessments upon persons employed by the Government, and disclosed the agreeable fact that public sentiment was singularly sound upon the subject. The Philadelphia Association had respectfully called the attention of the President to the abuse and requested his interference, but, without result. The indignant attention of the whole country, however, was immediately called to it. During the spring a number of members of Congress belonging to the same political party, and without authority from that party, calling themselves a Congressional Committee, issued circulars to postmasters and other employees of the Government of every class, assessing a tax of two per cent. or other specified sums upon the amount of their salary and wages. The persons assessed included day laborers in navy yards, workmen upon the Government works, messenger

boys, women clerks, hostlers, matrons, Indian assistants, nurses, laundresses, washer-women, and scrubbing-women, in Indian training schools and public offices. This committee cast a drag-net over the whole civil service. They combed it with an iron comb. Webster, speaking 50 years ago of an inquisition for spoils, did not dream of a search so remorseless and rapacious. The mean terror of the spoils system never touched so low a depth of degradation, and at no abuse of the power of patronage was the country ever more justly indignant.

On the 17th of June, the New York Association issued a circular to the same employees reminding them that they were liable to fine and dismissal should they comply. Mr. Jay A. Hubbell of Michigan, the Chairman and Treasurer of the committee, thereupon wrote a letter to the New York Association declaring that its counsel had misstated the law, either misunderstanding or perverting it, and professing his willingness to take any form of action in any tribunal to test the soundness of his circular. The Association immediately proposed to make a test case to be designated by Mr. Hubbell himself. After some delay Mr. Hubbell replied that such a course would be dishonorable for him; that, as a member of Congress, he was not amenable to the law—which the Association had not asserted—that he asked only for voluntary contributions; that no employee had ever been dismissed for declining to give; and that to cripple the action of his committee—that is, to warn the assessed employees that under the law they took the risk of dismissal if they paid—was to become the most efficient ally of Southern bulldozers.

Suddenly thrown upon their defense by public indignation, the leading members of the committee have echoed their chairman's

assertion that the circular asked only for voluntary contributions. But it is because such payments are justly held not to be voluntary that they are prohibited by law. "It is generally true," says Webster, "that he who controls another man's means of living, controls his will." Macaulay furnishes a quaint illustration of Webster's remark. When James II. issued an order a customs officer remarked that he had 14 reasons for obeying His Majesty's command — a wife and 13 young children. I have known men in our own civil service who received orders to vote against their wishes and who said to me frankly, "to disobey would be to take the bread from the mouths of our families." The law which forbids payment of political assessments by an employee of the Government to an officer of the Government, merely expresses the universal conviction that when persons who can dismiss a subordinate without assigning any reason whatever, ask him to pay a specified percentage of his wages to promote a cause in which they tell him that he is as much interested as they are, and when they dun him sharply and insolently for payment, he is virtually threatened, and his compliance is no more voluntary than that of the traveller upon the highway who gave up his purse to Dick Turpin. Those who ask free gifts do not demand a purse at the point of a pistol. Those who solicit voluntary contributions do not specify the amount, nor require them as a due, nor threaten to report non-payment as a delinquency.

The demand is addressed to the office-holders and not to other citizens for the very reason that it is known that the office-holders will not feel at liberty, like other citizens, to refuse. Indeed, the argument is often urged that they owe their places to the party and that they ought to pay willingly to help the party. But this

is not asking a voluntary contribution, this is simply selling an office. There are plenty of rich men in Mr. Hubbell's party. But no circular was ever sent to them demanding a payment of two per cent. upon their incomes. There are gallant officers of the Army and Navy, but no politician dares to assess them two per cent. upon their pay to be spent without account by an irresponsible committee. The character and tone of all these circulars; the fact that they are issued by political committees and are addressed only to employees appointed and removable by political influence; the specification of a percentage and of a certain sum; the description of the payment as a due; the peremptory reiteration of the demand; the threat of reporting delinquents to a superior official authority; the methods of collection; the universal understanding of the recipients of the circular that there is serious risk in refusing to pay — all of which facts are proved beyond question, show indisputably that what is called a request for a voluntary contribution is an assessment levied under a virtual threat of dismissal. This is so notorious that every man who is familiar with practical politics laughs at the assertion that the money so obtained is a free gift.

Mr. Hubbell and the members of his committee declare that nobody has ever been dismissed from the public service for refusing to pay the party assessment. But in saying this they assert what they cannot possibly know, because it is not necessary to assign reasons for the removal of the subordinates to whom the circular is addressed. They are dismissed without reasons alleged and, if it were necessary to state a cause, pretended reasons would not be wanting. A distinguished Senator, a member of Mr. Hubbell's committee, said in the Senate that of 100,000 persons to whom the circular of 1880 was sent only about 11,500

responded affirmatively, and he challenged the production of the name of a single person who had been dismissed for declining to pay. But in the nature of the case such a name cannot be produced, because such a reason is never given. Every one of the 100,000 probably received a similar summons from State and district and local committees. Does the Senator know how many responded? Can he possibly know that the 90,000 who did not respond to Mr. Hubbell were equally obdurate to the other demands? Does he know that the 11,500 who did respond to Mr. Hubbell did not also give to the other extortioners? Does he not know that men receiving \$1,000 a year have been required in some years to pay assessments of six per cent. of their salaries? Neither the Senator nor any one else except the superior officer can know how many removals have been made in consequence of refusal to pay. He is aware not only that subordinates are dismissed without alleging reasons, but also that certain reasons are never alleged. What, for example, could be more contemptible than to dismiss an honest and efficient clerk from the public service because an influential politician wishes his place for a parasite of his own? Yet I have known, and perhaps the Senator has known, such removals to be made. But I never knew such a reason to be assigned for a removal.

To protest against political assessments of this kind is not to deny that great public objects can be attained by the good understanding and thorough organization of those who desire them. Every man, whether in the public service or not, is at perfect liberty to give what he chooses for the just expenses of an election. But for obvious reasons which I have stated, certain officers of the Government are forbidden to give to each other. The Attorney-

General has given an opinion that among these officers members of Congress are not included. Upon this point, however, a judicial opinion will doubtless be asked. But while really voluntary contributions are not forbidden, the collection of an enormous election fund is not only unnecessary, it is dangerous and suspicious. The honest and legitimate election expenses of any district in the country are not large, and the dishonest use of money at elections, the tendency to select rich men as candidates for office, has become so general and threatening that it is the duty of all good citizens resolutely to oppose it. The corruption of elections by money must cease, or the Government will become an oligarchy of rich men. Free elections are the corner-stone of the Republic. But they cease to be free not only when the voter is bought, but when the necessary cost of elections is not a perfectly free gift. The people of the United States will pay willingly all the necessary expenses of a party which represents a policy that they approve. But whenever a party must be sustained by forced loans, by assessments, by extortion and virtual robbery, it is a party which has lost the confidence of the country. It represents the popular will no longer. It maintains its ascendancy by illicit means, and it has become a public peril which all patriotic citizens should combine to remove.

But of the crime against the country for which we arraign the spoils system the iniquity of political assessments is only a single evil result. These assessments breed the dangerous suspicion in the public mind that the party in power carries the election not by the unbought assistance of its friends, but by a corruption fund drawn from the public treasury in the form of robbery of wages of the office-holders. The determination of the Presidential election

is confessedly the weakest part of our political system. But to persist in throwing doubt upon the honesty of the vote is to persist in invoking anarchy. To terrorize Government employees in order to raise money to suppress political terror elsewhere is—to apply language which has been applied to us—to bulldoze one class of citizens to prevent the bulldozing of another. The accumulation of a vast official corruption fund for the elections is a danger possible only under a system of appointments and removals in the civil service by personal intrigue, influence and favor. To destroy this growing peril; to remove this fatal distrust of a party in power; to restore parties to their normal and proper function; to emancipate the civil service from the degradation inseparable from a tenure of personal favor; to restore equal rights to every citizen whether in office or out of office, and to promote in the highest degree the economy and efficiency of administration, this is the purpose of the National Civil-Service Reform League and of the local associations which compose it.

This glance at a triumphant year would be incomplete if I omitted to mention the reform movement in Pennsylvania. The facts are familiar. Resolved to overthrow an ignominious despotism, which has long subjugated one of the great political parties in that State, a large portion of the party has made independent nominations. Their protest is against “Bosses” and “Machines.” But knowing that these are only the result of the evil system which bases party organization, not upon a common conviction and purpose, but upon patronage and spoils, they denounce that system as fatal to popular government and demand the reform which it is the object of this League to secure. Rejecting specious offers of compromise which would have been surrender, they have appealed

to the manly self-respect of American citizenship and await the issue. The serious significance of this movement is that it involves a party defeat by members of the party. That is to say, in one of the great States, whose vote may well decide a National election, party defeat is preferred by half the dominant party, or by the balance of power in that party, to the yoke of the spoils despotism which has recently overpowered it. This fact is of the highest political importance. When an issue of general interest divides a party in one State, the results cannot be confined to that State. It is a fire that will spread over the country. The recent significance of parties is disappearing. They now cohere largely by the mere force of tradition. But here is a fresh and vital question commanding the conviction and enthusiasm of young men, the hearty approval of older men, and the earnest support of the most intelligent press throughout the country. Like the giant of classic fable, it shakes the mountain. If the question is strong enough to rive asunder the dominant party in one State, it is strong enough to threaten parties in every State. The movement in Pennsylvania is a sign of the general consciousness that new issues are arising. It shows that the intelligence of the country already craves a more inspiring political music than the cackling of old party hens over stale eggs. Guides blind to the sunlight are not guides for alert and early travellers.

Political parties indeed cannot be improvised, but it is easy to see tendencies and to forecast results. What Sir James McIntosh said of constitutions is true of parties; they grow, they are not made. The Abbe Sièyes proposed a new constitution every few days in the French revolutionary convention, but they were all worthless. Time is the great ally and patience the cardinal virtue

of political progress. But if parties cannot be improvised it is possible both to see them growing and crumbling. I saw a party which elected a President in 1848 dissolve and disappear before 1858. Indeed, this is a moment and a situation in which our political history is very suggestive. Thirty years ago the Conscience Whigs and the Free-soil Democrats each hoped that their party would take the true American, patriotic, humane and progressive position upon the question which had thrust aside banks and sub-treasuries and tariffs, and had become in the popular heart the paramount question of the time. Each hoped that their party would become the anti-slavery party. In New York Mr. Bryant and his Democratic friends had protested against the annexation of Texas. In Massachusetts Mr. Sumner had adjured Mr. Webster, the Whig Jupiter, to add to his great title, Defender of the Constitution, the greater title, defender of humanity. Protest and adjuration were in vain.* The country had fallen wounded by the way and the Pharisee and the Levite passed by on the other side. But humanity and liberty, which the party leaders spurned, were still precious to the people. After vain hopes and endeavors and delays, Mr. Bryant and Mr. Sumner clasped hands, and conscience Whigs and Free-soil Democrats blended in a new and triumphant party. These are the treasures of experience and instruction that are stored in "history's golden urn." When once an object commends itself to the judgment and conscience of the American people, parties may oppose as a bull may run at a locomotive. So much the worse for the bull. There is no profounder conviction in the public mind to-day than that of the demoralization and danger inherent in the spoils system. The movement

in Pennsylvania indicates that if parties do not adjust themselves to this conviction, this conviction will reconstruct parties.

I end as I began. Never since the first distinct movement of reform was its progress so rapid as during the past year, or its prospects so fair as at this moment. We are happily and fitly assembled in Rhode Island, the State which was partly represented in Congress by Thomas Allen Jenckes, the pioneer of the reform. In the very darkness before the dawn his voice was heard, as confident and cheerful as our voices now when the sun is rising. Mr. Jenckes powerfully and vigorously and alone opened the debate in Congress 15 years ago. He drew the amendment to the appropriation bill of 1871, which became law by the efficient aid of Mr. Dawes of Massachusetts and Mr. Armstrong of Pennsylvania, and under which the civil service was appointed. Mr. Jenckes placed at its disposition all his correspondence with the English Commission, and by his experience, thorough knowledge, fertility of resource and suggestion, and great legal ability, he continued to serve with as much efficiency as modesty the cause to which he was devoted. It is an especial pride and pleasure for me, also a son of Rhode Island, to recall to your remembrance that unselfish patriotism and to imagine the pleasure with which Mr. Jenckes would have welcomed us here amid the hopes and promises of to-day. So slight was the interest in the subject when he introduced it, and so limited was the general knowledge of it that it was thought hardly worth while to denounce him. But the angry insolence of the spoils system that we behold, like the fierce roar of a monster driven to his den, shows its consciousness that the battle has begun in earnest. It has begun—the battle between the most dangerous abuses of administration and the patriotic good sense of

the country. Gentlemen, there is no more doubt of the issue than there is of the justice of our cause. If any man is dismayed by the uproar let him recall a story of the War. In the midst of a battle a sudden sharp shout rang out from the enemy's line, and a young Union soldier who was in his first fight, turned to his comrade and asked what it was. "That," cried his comrade, "that's the rebel yell. Does it frighten you?" "Frighten me?" said the young soldier, as he pressed more eagerly forward, "frighten me? It is the music to which I march." Gentlemen, when the enemy's yell is the music to which the soldier marches, he marches to victory.

On the conclusion of the address, which was listened to with the closest attention, the Hon. Sherman S. Rogers moved a vote of thanks to the speaker. The motion was unanimously adopted.

Mr. Schurz moved that a Committee on Resolutions and Recommendations be appointed by the Chair. The motion was adopted, and the Chair appointed, Messrs. Schurz, Harris, Rogers, Vaughan, and Pleasants.

On motion of Mr. Schurz a recess was then taken until half-past two, at which time the League was again called to order.

Hon. John Jay offered a series of resolutions, which were read and referred to the special committee heretofore appointed.

Mr. Eaton moved that a committee of three be appointed by the Chair to nominate a President. The motion was adopted, and the Chair appointed Messrs. Eaton, Russell, and Montgomery.

The committee, after consultation, presented the name of Mr. Curtis, and no other nomination being made, on motion of Mr. Rosengarten, Mr. Eaton was directed to cast one ballot for the nominee, and Mr. Curtis was declared duly re-elected.

A report from the Treasurer was presented and read by the Secretary, showing receipts of \$659.80, disbursements \$217.38, and a balance on hand of \$442.42.

On motion the report was referred to an Auditing Committee consisting of Messrs. Cromwell, Quincy, and Cole, who subsequently reported that they had examined the account and found it to be correct.

While awaiting the report of the Committee on Resolutions, Messrs. Eaton, Rosengarten, Hobart, and Wheeler spoke of the importance of sustaining the "Civil-Service Record" and extending its circulation, and the last named moved that the General Committee be recommended to appropriate a certain sum of money to pay for copies to be distributed at their discretion, which resolution was adopted.

Mr. John W. Carter urged the importance of a careful scrutiny of the records of members of Congress, with special reference to their votes and action with regard to the civil service, and the publication of the same from time to time for the benefit of their constituencies.

Mr. Schurz, from the Committee on Resolutions, then presented a report. Mr. Wheeler moved that the report be accepted and that the resolutions be taken up separately. The motion was adopted.

Mr. Wheeler said of the first resolution that, in a large number of Congressional districts, members were elected by very small majorities; sometimes not over 100, and in many less than 500. "A small body of resolute voters can control the election of a man who is committed positively to the support of this movement, or can defeat him if he is not. The present House of Representatives

is much less favorable to civil-service reform than the last House was. The civil-service committee in the last House gave it a careful hearing and devoted much time and attention to the subject. The committee of the present House has treated it with entire neglect. It was appointed for that purpose by the speaker. When we remember that Hubbell is one member of that committee, it is easy to see why we can get no satisfaction from it. The matter has been favorably received by the Senate, but quite otherwise by the House. As citizens we should say plainly to our representatives: 'We will not be trifled with any longer in this matter; we have had enough of promises made during the canvass; we want to see them kept after election.' There are some districts in which the Republican candidates committed to this cause would receive Democratic support; there are others in which such a Democratic candidate would receive Republican support. We need in the next House 25 active civil-service reformers, committed to the Pendleton and Willis bills; who will hold the balance of power, who will not vote for any man for speaker who is not committed unqualifiedly to this movement. Committees in the House of Representatives control the legislation. The voice of a single man in the House counts for little, but with such a body of men as I have indicated, we shall secure a fair committee. The people are in advance of our most sanguine hopes. The newspapers in all the larger cities give us important support. Let us see to it that we present to the people candidates to represent them in Congress who will perform what they promise in this matter. The labor is great. In some cases we shall be defeated, but there are some defeats more successful than victory, which have in them the seeds of future

success. It is better to make a good fight, even if we are defeated, than to sit down and be afraid to try."

Mr. Montgomery, Mr. Schurz, and Mr. Harris also advocated the resolution, which was unanimously adopted. It is as follows :

"Whereas, The time has come for promoting the cause of civil-service reform by means more direct than mere agitation ; and,

"Whereas, general promises in party platforms have in most cases proved mere snares to catch the votes of the credulous, subsequently to be ridiculed by those who made them ; and,

Whereas, it is necessary to bring their responsibility directly home to the representatives of the people in Congress in a practical way,

"It is recommended that Civil-Service Reform Associations cause the candidates for Congress of the different political parties within the circle of their influence at the coming election, to be interrogated as to their views and conceptions of duty with regard to practical legislation concerning civil-service reform ; and that the friends of the cause be urged to vote only for such candidates as give satisfactory guarantee of their sincerity in the support of definite measures of reform ; and that where the candidates of neither party give such guarantee, the friends of civil-service reform, as they may deem it practical, will present a candidate whose earnestness in that behalf can be depended upon."

The second resolution was then read, as follows :

"Whereas, the practice of raising party campaign funds by assessment upon the officers and employees of the Government is cruel in its nature and demoralizing in its effects, and has of late been carried on with unprecedented shamelessness, in defiance of the spirit and, in some cases, also of the letter of the law,

"It is recommended that wherever an officer or employee of the Government be found to have violated the law in that respect, the Civil-Service Reform Association, within whose constituency the case has occurred, take measures, the most efficient in its power, to prosecute the offender; and it is further recommended that the counsel of the National Civil-Service Reform League take such steps as they think proper for testing the legality of the so-called Hubbell circular by bringing the matter to judicial determination."

Mr. Wheeler, who is one of the counsel of the League, and who has also been engaged in the case against General Newton Martin Curtis, recently found guilty under the act relative to political assessments, and who has also been engaged in the matter of assessments by Hubbell's Congressional Committee, made a statement regarding the question of the position of members of Congress as officers of the Government, saying among other things that there was some misconception in regard to the Hubbell circular. "Reference has been made to the Blount case. It is said that this was an authoritative decision by the Senate of the United States that a Senator was not an officer of the Government. This is a mistake. Blount was a Senator from Tennessee, and was concerned in a treasonable project. He resigned his seat after articles of impeachment were presented against him; he pleaded that he had ceased to be a Senator and was not a civil officer, impeachable under the constitution. The House took the ground that he was a civil officer and impeachable. In any case, Blount's position was different from that of any representative under the existing statute, in reference to political assessments. The provision of the constitution which makes certain civil officers impeachable, is contained in the article

which in its scope is limited to executive officers, and it might fairly be argued that it had no application to legislative officers. Mr. Calhoun, in his last speech, said of the Senators: 'We, as representatives of the states of this Union, regarded as governments.' Webster, on the other hand, said in 1838: 'I came into public life in the service of the United States. I propose to serve no other master.' The whole meat of the discussion is contained in these two brief statements. Mr. Calhoun's idea was that he was not an officer of the general Government. But as an ambassador from South Carolina was bound therefore by instructions of his state, as an ambassador from the court of St. James would be bound by instructions of the home Government. But Webster took different views. The war settled this as it did many other questions. It is too late to claim that members of Congress represent only a local constituency. In 1864 we have an authoritative decision on the question. The act of 1862 provided 'every person elected or appointed to any office of honor or profit under the Government of the United States, either in the civil, military, or naval departments of the public service, shall take what was known as the ironclad oath.' The question came up whether a Senator was elected to an office of profit and honor under the Government and the Senate determined by a vote of 28 to 11 that he was. Mr. Sumner expressed his views upon this point in the following sentences: 'Inquiry recurs, Is a Senator an officer in the civil department of the public service? Is he an officer? Is he in the civil department? To raise these questions seems absurd. But I have not raised them. This is done by others. You might as well raise the question, if a man is a creature and belongs to the human family. Is a Senator an officer? Here please con-

sult this dictionary. I turn to Webster: 'Office—offices are civil, executive legislative, etc.' Thus plainly offices are legislative. Not content with the use of the dictionary, I call attention to the use of the word in other authoritative places. In the bill of rights of Massachusetts 'members of the Legislature are classed among officers, etc.' And, after quoting many similar sentences, he shows that the blue book is complied under a resolution that requires a list of all officers and agents of the United States. Since 1816, members of both houses of Congress are named in this list. After this vote of the Senate an act is passed that no executive officer of the United States shall pay to any other officer any money for political purposes. The Senate, in adopting that act, intended to include members of Congress as well as other officers; if not, why not in the second clause use the same language as in the first? They carefully omitted the term executive in the second clause, and thereby, by necessary implication, extended it to all officers, legislative as well as executive. We have the melancholy spectacle of the Attorney-General of the United States taking up the cast-off clouts of the old states rights party. Although he has given an adverse opinion, we must bring this matter to a judicial determination."

The resolution was adopted.

The form of the third resolution excited considerable debate, which was participated in by Mr. Harris (who detailed the circumstances of the efforts made during the past winter by the Philadelphia Association to obtain from President Arthur an explicit statement that political assessments were unauthorized, and that refusal on the part of the employees of the Government to pay such assessments would entail no unpleasant consequences upon those so

refusing), by Mr. Crocker, Mr. Eaton, Mr. Jay, Mr. Cromwell, Mr. Russell, Mr. Bonaparte, Mr. Potter, Mr. Ball, Mr. Browne, Mr. Curtis, and Mr. Schurz.

Mr. Bonaparte vigorously urged the adoption of the resolution, saying :

“This seems to me a very valuable resolution. We have a perfect right to demand of every public officer, and most of all the chief public officer of the nation, that he shall discharge the duties which properly belong to his station. What he will do in regard to the request which we are entitled to make to him, and which I know will be made in the most proper and respectful manner, is a matter which concerns him, but does not concern us. If he chooses to neglect it, he will be to blame for it, and though it is the duty of the President to execute the laws in the spirit of the constitution, whether the citizens call his attention to the infraction of those laws or not, it is none the less the duty of the citizens of the United States to call the attention of the chief executive officer to abuses which have grown up under their eyes. He is entitled to the presumption of ignorance of what it is his duty to prevent, until a direct application to him for interference meets with refusal or neglect.

“It appears to me that to qualify the language of Mr. Webster on that subject, would be to diminish the force of the entire appeal. I am ready to admit the principle that civil officers of the Government are entitled to interference in political matters to that extent which we would consider proper on the part of military or naval officers, who hold offices which are dependent on the discretion of the executive, and are not of a political nature. Every one would see the gross impropriety in a major-general or an ad-

miral going round and making stump speeches in support of a member of Congress; and I consider that it is as gross an impropriety, and I believe it was thought to be as much of an impropriety by the scholars and statesmen of whom Webster formed one, for a Collector of Customs or a Postmaster to do the same thing.

"I think the second expression in that resolution is one that we ought to be prepared to endorse, and I think it is a good way for this League to go before the country, and say that if we have done nothing else, at all events, we have asked the President of the United States to do his duty."

Mr. Crocker opposed the resolution at considerable length, and moved an amendment which was subsequently withdrawn. Mr. Cromwell moved that the resolution be laid on the table. The President, before asking a vote on this motion made a brief address. Mr. Cromwell withdrew his motion temporarily, and in explanation of what Webster had in view in the quotation contained in the resolution, Mr. Schurz said: "There is an immense difference between the postmaster of New York coming to the polls and voting for his candidate, or expressing his opinion in favor of his candidate, and, on the other hand discharging the whole of his letter carriers because they do not vote with him. One is a partisan action on the part of an individual in office, which is perfectly proper, and the other is the most damnable thing in the exercise of partisanship. It is a crime against the spirit of our institutions for an officer to use the power in his hands, which belongs to the whole people, in favor of one portion against another portion of the people of the United States."

After some further debate Mr. Cromwell renewed his motion to lay on the table which was lost.

On motion of Mr. Ball, the resolution was recommitted to the committee for revision, and it was subsequently reported in the following form and unanimously adopted :

"Whereas, the assessment circular of the Republican Congressional Committee and the language of the Circuit Court of the United States in the case of General Curtis recall the letter of Daniel Webster accompanying an order of the President to the several heads of the executive departments in which he most unequivocally condemns and forbids as bringing the patronage of the general Government into conflict with the freedom of elections, partisan interference on the part of officers of the Government by illegitimate use of their official power and influence as well as the payment of any contribution or assessment on salaries or official compensation for party or election purposes, the President of the National Civil-Service Reform League is requested to bring to the attention of the National Executive the letter and order of Mr. Webster, and respectfully to ask him to issue a similar order for correction of such abuses, and to take such other steps to that end as may be found constitutional and proper."

The fourth resolution was also unanimously adopted as follows :

"Resolved, that a committee of five members of the National Civil-Service Reform League be appointed by the chair for the purpose of issuing an address to the voters of the United States, setting forth the principles of civil-service reform, and asking for the support of all citizens, without distinction of party, at the approaching elections, and that the President of the League be the chairman of that committee."

Mr. Jay offered the following resolutions, which were discussed by Prof. Adams, Messrs. Richmond, Wendte, Eaton, Rogers, Jay, and others, and were finally adopted with an amendment offered by Mr. Wheeler, that the committees proposed therein be authorized to add to their number if they see fit :

"Resolved, that a committee of five be appointed to address the clergy of all denominations, advising them of the aims of the reform movement, and respectfully asking their co-operation.

"Resolved, that a committee of five be appointed to address the friends of education and those in authority over universities, colleges, academies, and public schools, in reference to the effect which civil-service reform in the nation and in the states would have in making positions the reward of good character, excellence in education and general fitness."

The resolutions, as a whole, were then adopted by a unanimous vote.

The President subsequently named the several committees as follows :

On General Address :

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS, of New York, Chairmar.

SHERMAN S. ROGERS, of Buffalo, N. Y.

CHARLES THEODORE RUSSELL, of Cambridge, Mass.

HENRY HITCHCOCK, of St. Louis, Mo.

CHARLES J. BONAPARTE, of Batimore, Md.

GEORGE M. DALLAS, of Philadelphia, Pa.

On Address to the Clergy :

JOHN JAY, of New York, Chairman.

Rev. JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE, of Boston, Mass.

Rt. Rev. STEPHEN V. RYAN, of Buffalo, N. Y.

Rev. SAMUEL J. NICCOLLS, of St. Louis, Mo.

Rev. J. ANDREWS HARRIS, of Philadelphia, Pa.

On Address to the Friends of Education :

Ex-Prest. THEODORE D. WOOLSEY, of Yale College, Chairman.

President CHARLES W. ELIOT, of Harvard University.

President DANIEL C. GILMAN, of Johns Hopkins University.

President JAMES McCOSH, of Princeton College.

President JAMES B. ANGELL, of the University of Michigan.

Upon the final passage of the resolutions as above, on motion of Mr. Schurz the meeting adjourned *sine die* after a session characterized by entire harmony as to the objects to be striven for, by striking unanimity of feeling as to the methods to be pursued, and by the utmost enthusiasm, satisfaction with the progress hitherto made, and confidence in the early success of the cause.

WILLIAM POTTS, *Secretary*.

PROCEEDINGS

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF

The National Civil-Service Reform League

HELD AT

NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND, AUGUST 1, 1883,

WITH THE ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

HON. GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS

NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED FOR THE
NATIONAL CIVIL-SERVICE REFORM LEAGUE,

1883.

FRESS OF
WILLIAM S. GOTTSBERGER,
11 Murray St., New York.

Annual Meeting
OF THE
NATIONAL CIVIL-SERVICE REFORM LEAGUE.
AUGUST 1, 1883.

The Annual Meeting of the League was held in Newport, Rhode Island, August 1, 1883, pursuant to call duly issued. The authorities of the Channing Memorial Church having kindly tendered the use of their building, the members of the League, together with many others, assembled there at 11:30 A.M. when the President, Mr. George William Curtis, delivered the following address upon

The Progress of Reform.

Two years ago a conference of friends of reform in the Civil Service was held in this place. The conference organized this National League and passed the following resolution :—

Resolved, that the bill introduced in the Senate by Mr. Pendleton of Ohio provides a constitutional, practicable, and effective measure for the remedy of the abuse known as the spoils system, and that the associations represented in the conference will use every honorable means, in the press, on the platform, and by petition, to secure its passage.

That resolution was adopted on the 11th of August, 1881. On the 16th of January 1883, upon the earnest recommendation of President and by overwhelming majorities in Congress, the Pendleton bill became a law, and on the 16th of July, 1883 amid the general applause of the country it went into effect. If the year which ended at our last annual meeting could be truly called the year of awakening, that which ends to day may be as truly described as the year of achievement. I doubt if any reform of similar scope and importance has ever commended itself more rapidly to public approval, and nothing could more fully justify confident and patient reliance upon a persistent and reasonable appeal to public opinion than the progress of this movement.

When we met here a year ago, Congress was still in session. The Pendleton bill had been reported to the Senate, but no action had been taken. The House of Representatives, with ribald sneers at the project of reform, had contemptuously granted the President three-fifths of the pittance which he had "urgently" asked to enable him to continue efforts of reform which had been begun. The record of the proceedings upon this subject in the House of Representatives last summer is one of the most disgraceful passages in the history of Congress. Members not only ridiculed the suggestion of reform in administrative methods, but they summarily swept aside the President's veto of extravagant appropriations. At the annual meeting of the league, in speaking of the conduct of certain members of Congress I ventured to say that they were singularly ignorant of the tendency and force of public opinion, and that reckless defiance of public intelligence was a perilous record upon which to go to the country. The issue was plainly made and an appeal taken at the polls. The

result of the election was startling and impressive. The most conspicuous enemies of reform were dismissed by their constituents from the public service, and, although it is not always easy precisely to define the significance of a general election, it was universally conceded that, whatever else the result might mean, it was a clear and decisive demand of the country for Civil-Service Reform. The response of Congress was immediate, and never was the flexibility of a popular system more signally displayed.

The Congress which had adjourned in August laughing at reform, heard the thunder of the elections in November and reassembled in December. If members had been draped in sheets and had carried candles, they could not have borne a more penitential aspect. On the 4th of December the President sent in his message. He frankly urged the passage of the Pendleton bill or of some other equally effective measure, and promised his hearty cooperation in enforcing it. On the same day in the House, Mr. Kasson introduced a bill for the better regulation of the civil service; Mr. Herbert a bill to prohibit political assessments; Mr. Hiscock a resolution to facilitate the range of a general reform bill; and the rules of the House were suspended in order to direct the committee upon reform to report at any time. Nothing could restrain the righteous zeal for reform. On the 6th a stringent inquiry was proposed by Mr. Beck in the Senate into the system of political assessments. On the 7th additional copies of the Pendleton bill, for which, it was stated, there is "much call," were ordered printed. On the 9th the committee of the House of Representatives on reform in the civil service reported what was known as the Kasson bill as a substitute for the Pendleton bill. On the same day in the Senate, in reply to an

inquiry. Mr. Pendleton said that he proposed to make his bill a special order for the 11th. During all these days the debate upon the political assessments was proceeding in the Senate, and upon this day, the 9th, a comprehensive and effective bill prohibiting such assessments under severe penalties was introduced by Mr. Hawley, and was referred to the committee on civil service and retrenchment of which he was chairman. This bill is comprised in the 11th and 15th sections of the reform bill as finally passed. On the 11th of December Mr. Pendleton called up the bill known by his name, which was temporarily laid aside until the next day. On the 12th the Senate ordered the reports upon the administration of the post-office and custom-house in New York, in which the reformed system was enforced, to be laid before it. The Pendleton bill was then read for the first time with certain carefully considered amendments, and then, on the 8th day of the session, Mr. Pendleton in an elaborate speech opened the debate.

On the same day the Kasson bill as amended was reported to the House. Mr. Willis of Kentucky and Mr. Bayne of Pennsylvania introduced two substitutes which were substantially the Pendleton bill. On the 13th Mr. Kasson sought to press his bill in the House, but Mr. Hiscock,* disclaiming any desire to delay legislation upon the subject, preferred to await the action of the Senate, and the House took up an appropriation bill. On the same day the Senate referred the proposal for inquiry into the system of political assessments to the committee on the judiciary. It rained and hailed reform. On the 15th of December in the House, Mr. Harris of Massachusetts introduced a reform bill. On the 20th Mr. Dawes in the Senate relinquished the bill which he had proposed to substitute, and advocated the passage of the

Pendleton bill. On the 23rd Mr. Edmunds from the committee on the judiciary reported a bill prohibiting assessments. On the 24th Mr. Hawley from the committee on civil service and retrenchment offered four sections, including his bill of the 9th, which are now the 11th, 12th, 13th, and 15th sections of the reform act. The debate in the Senate had continued for a fortnight, and the opposition, at last aware of the positive demand of the country, had sought to defeat reform indirectly by amendments intended to cripple the bill. Mr. Hawley, as chairman of the committee which had reported the bill at the previous session, had charge of it through the discussion, and displayed the most excellent tact and temper, acuteness and agility, in perceiving and baffling the blows which were meant to disable and, if possible, to destroy it. During the progress of the debate, Messrs. Dorman B. Eaton and Everett P. Wheeler went to Washington on behalf of this league, and by their familiarity with the details of the bill, as well as with the nature and extent of the abuses to be corrected and with the principles and history of the reform movement, rendered great service to the cause. On the 27th of December, three weeks and two days from the opening of the session, the Pendleton bill passed the Senate by a vote of 38 yeas to 5 nays, 33 senators being absent. On the following day the bill prohibiting political assessments, which Mr. Edmunds had reported from the judiciary committee, was passed, in addition to the rigorous prohibitory provisions already incorporated in the reform bill.

On the 30th of December the Pendleton bill and the Edmunds assessment bill were received by the House from the Senate, and were referred to the committee on reform in the civil

service with leave to report at any time. On the same day the House adjourned until the 2d of January. On the 4th Mr. Kasson reported the Pendleton bill without amendment, and hoped that the debate would be ended in a week. A confused colloquy began upon the rightful precedence of other bills, in the midst of which Mr. Cox of New York proposed amid applause that, as the Pendleton bill had been thoroughly discussed in the Senate, it should be at once put upon its passage in the House. The disposition of the House was unmistakable, but a desperate effort was made to defer the vote by sending the bill to the committee of the whole. The speaker steadily ruled that the House would proceed to consider the bill, and recognized Mr. Kasson. The bill was read. Amid great excitement and applause Mr. Kasson moved the previous question. It was ordered. A demand for debate was made amidst a loud cry for the vote. The speaker ruled that 30 minutes for debate were allowed by the rules upon a bill which had not been debated and upon which the previous question had been ordered. A rapid debate followed. Amendments were attempted, but they were ruled out of order. Appeals were made to amend by unanimous consent and to recommit with instructions. But every device to obtain delay and to strike at the bill was happily baffled. The 30 minutes expired, and Mr. Kasson demanded the yeas and nays upon the passage of the bill. They were ordered, and by a vote of 155 yeas to 47 nays, and with 87 members not voting, the Pendleton bill was passed.

The House which was so eager to make the bill a law that it would not tolerate debate and loudly cheered the proposal of an immediate vote, was the same house that five months before had derisively and angrily refused to give a paltry sum and to aid a

single experiment of reform. Members who could not laugh loud enough at the ridiculous whim of transacting the public business upon business principles, now tumbled over each other in their breathless haste to make that whim the national policy. From that moment that Congress met, this question had taken precedence of all others. As Mr. Willis truly said, "Bill had followed bill, resolution had crowded upon resolution," and Congress did not pause until the duty which it felt to be the most imperative was performed. The Congressional Record of December 5th records the meeting of Congress. The record of January 5th records the passage of the Pendleton bill. I have told the story in detail, for I know no more amusing and significant story in the history of American politics.

But the history of the year discloses other striking results of the public interest in the subject. A year ago the case of Gen. Curtis, an employè of the United States indicted for receiving political assessments, was still pending. He had been convicted on the 25th of May in the circuit court of the United States for the southern district of New York. Upon his appeal, the full bench of the court on the 20th of July affirmed the constitutionality of the law. Gen. Curtis appealed to the supreme court, and, at the October term, the chief justice of the United States delivered the opinion of the court sustaining that of the circuit court and affirming the constitutionality of such prohibitory legislation. In the election of the last autumn in all the States where there were reform associations, congressional and state candidates were closely questioned, and their replies were published that their position upon the question of reform might be clearly understood. In the 9th congressional district of Massachusetts, the election

turned upon that question. Theodore Lyman was nominated distinctively as a reform candidate, and he was elected by a decisive majority.

The general result of the election was so universally interpreted as a demand for reform that it was not surprising that the State Legislatures which assembled at the beginning of the year showed the same interest in the question which was apparent in Congress. Bills and resolutions upon the subject were introduced in the Legislatures of New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. In Ohio no action was taken. In Pennsylvania a general bill was defeated, and a very moderate prohibition of political assessments was adopted. In New York a bill modeled upon the Pendleton bill, mandatory in the State and permissive in cities of 50,000 inhabitants and upward, was prepared by the New York association. With this was combined another bill introduced by Mr. Miller of the city of New York, giving very searching and extensive authority of inquiry into the municipal service. The bill contained also the most stringent prohibition of political assessments which has yet been proposed. Petitions favoring reform legislation were presented from every part of the State. The New York reform association was ably represented before the committees which had charge of the subject. The republican and democratic young men's clubs of Brooklyn especially interested themselves in the passage of the bill to which the governor of the state was known to be favorable. It had sagacious and intrepid friends and advocates upon the floor of the Legislature, but action was delayed until the very closing hours of the session, when, without amendment and by an enormous majority, the reform bill was passed. It was immediately signed by the governor, who simultaneously

nominated a commission which was the earnest of his own good faith and of the firm and honest administration of the law. This event is second only in importance to the passage of the reform bill by Congress. It was in the State of New York that under the council of appointment the spoils system was adopted nearly a century ago. It was the politicians of New York who gave it its first organized impulse. It was in response to Henry Clay's taunt at the New York system that a New York senator made the famous defense that to the victor belong the spoils of his enemy. It is in New York that the evils and the perils, the dishonor, the corruption, the degradation of the system have been most fully displayed. And it was in New York also that the first vigorous, resolute, and unquailing opposition to the evil system was organized. It was most fitting, therefore, that the chief of sinners among the States should lead the van of reform, for the political reform that is possible in New York is practicable everywhere in the country.

At the last meeting of the league a resolution was adopted requesting the president to bring to the attention of the national executive the letter and order of Mr. Webster as secretary of state, upon the conflict of patronage with the freedom of elections. But at a meeting of the executive committee held later in the year, it was agreed that, in the situation then existing, such action for the present was inexpedient. During the year the attitude of the national executive toward reform has been upon the whole, and notwithstanding certain inconsistencies of conduct, one of friendly observation. The efficiency of the Pendleton bill depended at the beginning wholly upon the good faith of the President. Had he desired to discredit and to defeat its purpose, he had only to appoint an unfriendly commission. But the selection as the first

named commissioner of one of the ablest, sincerest, and most devoted friends of reform, Mr. Dorman B. Eaton of New York, and the association with him of Dr. Gregory of Illinois and Judge Thoman of Ohio, was the conclusive earnest of the President's desire to give the reform system fair play. This is the more significant because the President's previous course, and his faith in the spoils system as essential to effective party organization, had excited great apprehension that he would use his vast patronage in a manner to confirm and aggravate the evils of that system. But this apprehension has not been justified. In certain instances indeed, and especially in the removal of the late naval officer of New York, one of the most efficient and experienced officers in the public service, there was a flagrant disregard of the essential principles of reform. But the ingenious manner in which this disregard was veiled in an apparent desire to promote the interests of reform was in itself evidence of the President's consciousness of the public expectation that tried and capable officers shall not be removed under the plea of the expiration of their terms. But, on the other hand, the president's steady refusal to satisfy the faction of his party which demands that the public patronage shall be prostituted to a factional interest, is most honorable to the chief magistrate; and, whatever exception may be justly taken to many acts of the administration in regard to appointments and removals, it will not be denied by fair men of every party that a President whose accession by means of a most tragical event was generally regarded as a serious misfortune, if not calamity, has not only allayed all apprehension of a gross misuse of the patronage of the government, but by his pacific and temperate administration has gained the approval of the country.

The league also at the last annual meeting directed the appointment of three committees to issue respectively addresses to the voters, to the clergy, and to the educational authorities of the United States, in promotion of the general objects of the league. The committees were appointed and the addresses were duly issued with the exception to that of the friends of education, which is not yet fully prepared. During the year also the progress of the cause has had a most faithful chronicler in the Civil Service Record, published by the reform associations of Boston and Cambridge. The Massachusetts associations and those in Philadelphia, Baltimore, Buffalo, Pittsburg, and St. Louis have been central points of interest and activity for their various sections of the country. On all sides there are signs of unflagging spirit, and there is no reason to fear that the mutual congratulation and compliment which are natural in this assembly and at this hour, will paralyze the energy or relax the care and foresight of the friends of reform. The passage of the Pendleton bill by Congress and of the State bill in New York; the appointment of the commissioners and their devotion to their duty; the opinion of the supreme court and the prohibition of political assessments, with the general public interest on the subject of reform, are all but incentives to continued effort. The passage of the Pendleton bill is the beginning, not the end, of reform. It prescribe methods of appointment to certain classes of positions in the civil service. But it is to be extended to all similar positions only by direction of the President, and the President will act only in deference to public sentiment. There are also large and most important branches of the service, such as that which includes laborers, to which the reformed system is yet to be adapted, but whose inclusion is demanded by the very

purposes of reform. So long as laborers are appointed by mere favoritism, one of the strongest weapons of the spoils system remains. But certainly the same good sense which skilfully applies the reformed method to the selection of night inspectors of customs, will readily provide for applying it also to the appointment of laborers.

Another most important step yet to be taken is the application of the reformed system to the municipal service. The Massachusetts league of reform associations has appointed a very able committee to inquire into the whole subject; and, most fortunately for the enquiry and the experiment, one of the cities in the state of New York of 50,000 inhabitants and upwards is the city of Brooklyn, and the Mayor of Brooklyn is one of the most practical and strenuous friends of reform, Seth Low. He sought an early conference with the New York commission, and I am very sure that the deliberations of the Massachusetts committee, the New York commission, and Mayor Low will result in a practicable scheme of spoiling the municipal spoilers.

But the especial object to which the National League will devote its attention, now that the Pendleton bill has become a law, has been already declared by its executive committee on the 7th of March, 1883. This object is the repeal of the United States statutes which limit the term of most of the subordinate officers to four years, and which result in practically establishing that term for all offices, places, and employments in the service, except such as are specifically excepted. The mischievous practice is strongly intrenched in tradition, and it is speciously defended. But it was introduced to prostitute the public service to personal control, and it is one of the chief sources of the abuses which have aroused

public attention and indignation. The first law upon this subject was approved by President Monroe on the 15th of May, 1820. Until that time the power of executive removal, which was affirmed by the first Congress, was thought to render such a limitation unnecessary. This decision of the first Congress, consequent mainly upon the urgency of Madison, has been regarded as a conclusive interpretation of the constitution. But Madison was very careful to denounce in advance the abuses which have arisen under that interpretation, by declaring, in the most emphatic and unmistakable manner, that the exercise of the power of removal for any reason not connected with the efficiency of the service would subject the president to impeachment. Mr. Jefferson in his famous reply to the remonstrance of the merchants of New Haven against the removal of the collector at that port, commenting upon the action of his predecessor which he considered unjustifiable, used the phrase which has become familiar; "I shall correct the procedure and, that done, return with joy to that state of things where the only question concerning a candidate shall be, 'Is he honest, is he capable, is he faithful to the constitution?'" In these words Mr. Jefferson recognized that honesty, capacity, and patriotic fidelity had been the considerations which determined appointment and removal.

The constitutional intention is indisputable that appointments shall be made solely upon public considerations, and that the officer appointed shall serve as long as he discharges his duty properly and satisfactorily. This view at once draws the line between political and non-political offices. Public considerations plainly require that those who are selected to represent or to carry into effect the general policy which the country has approved at

the polls shall be friendly to it. Washington stated the principle clearly in saying "I shall not, whilst I have the honor to administer the government, bring a man into any office of consequence, knowingly, whose political tenets are adverse to the measures which the general government is pursuing, for this in my opinion would be a sort of political suicide: that it would embarrass its movements is certain." This is the true principle. But it is not a principle applicable to subordinate ministerial officers, as the republican Jefferson and the federalist Bayard both distinctly stated during the delay in the election of 1800. And even one of the most devoted of party politicians, James Buchanan, said in the Senate in 1839: "I should not become an inquisitor of the political opinions of the subordinate office-holders who are receiving salaries of some \$800 or \$1000 a year." This was the constitutional theory and practice for the first generation after the establishment of the government. But as the number of officers increased, the power of patronage was proportionally extended and the opportunity to misuse it became irresistible.

The year 1820 marks a distinct epoch in the progress of the spoils system. On the 16th of December, 1819, at the opening of Congress, Mr. Dickerson of New Jersey, a devoted friend of Mr. Crawford who was then secretary of the treasury and a candidate for the presidential nomination, offered a resolution of inquiry into the expediency of altering laws so as to provide a limited term for certain officers mentioned, who should be subject to removal as before. John Quincy Adams records that Mr. Crawford told him that he drew the bill, and Mr. Adams adds that, while its ostensible object was to secure the accountability of

certain collecting officers, the real purpose was to secure for Mr. Crawford the influence of all the incumbents in office upon peril of displacement, and of five or ten times as many ravenous office-seekers eager to supplant them. The inquiry proposed by Mr. Dickerson was ordered on the 20th of December. On the 20th of April the finance committee, to which it had been referred, reported a bill accordingly; on the 21st it was read the second time; and on the 5th of May, after some unimportant amendments and without debate, the bill was read a third time and passed by a vote of 29 yeas to 4 nays. On the 9th of May it was received in the House. On the 11th it was reported without amendment, passed without debate, and was approved on the 15th of May. The bill had apparently attracted no especial attention or interest. But the real object of the bill, Mr. Adams says, was accomplished. The custom-house officers throughout the Union, the district attorneys, marshals, registers of the land-officers, receivers of public moneys, paymasters in the army, and all their family connections became "ardent Crawfordites."

In November of the same year, Gov. DeWitt Clinton of New York said in his message at the opening of the Legislature that the power of the general administration had increased with its patronage, and he declared it to be his solemn duty to protest against the interference of the national office-holders as "an organized and disciplined corps" in the state elections. An angry reply was made by a joint committee of the Senate and Assembly. But their report shows plainly that, while the just and reasonable practice of the earlier administrations still generally prevailed,—so that the collector of New York alleges that the political conduct of his subordinates was wholly uninfluenced by him and that their

political sentiments were indifferent or unknown to him,—yet it shows no less that the political abuse of the national patronage had begun. In November, 1820, Mr. Jefferson writes to Mr. Madison totally condemning the four-years' law as introducing fatal intrigue and corruption; as sapping the constitutional functions of the President; placing every office once every four years at the disposition of the Senate; stimulating the constant greed of place; breeding the utmost sycophancy to senators; and engaging them in endless cabals to turn out and put in their parasites. Mr. Madison replies that the law is certainly pregnant with all the mischiefs which Mr. Jefferson describes. It disregards, he says, the important distinction between the legislative function of repealing or modifying the office and the executive function of displacing the officer. Mr. Madison adds that even the legislative modification, if designed to reestablish the office and to allow a new appointment, would be a violation of the constitution. If the principle of the statute is sound, he argues, Congress may limit the term of appointments to a single year or to the next meeting of Congress—to a week, to a day, as John Quincy Adams remarks, commenting upon Madison's view—and so annihilate the executive power. Mr. Jefferson had said that the President must have signed the law without reading it, because the Senate, which thus legally grasped his power, would never consent to relinquish it. Mr. Madison replies that, if the error be not at once corrected, relief will be difficult, for it is of a nature to take deep root. Mr. Adams, who was then secretary of state, states that President Monroe signed the bill unwarily and without perceiving its real character, and he adopted the practice, which Mr. Adams carefully followed, the only just and constitutional

practice, of renominating every officer at the expiration of his commission unless some official delinquency or unfitness could be proved against him.

Both Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison clearly foresaw and described the consequences of the four-years' law. On the 4th of May, 1826, the select committee on the reduction of patronage reported to the Senate a bill providing for its repeal, to repair the mischief as much as possible. The report stated that the law operated against its own intent and served to turn out faithful officers instead of retaining them. The expiration of the term had come to be regarded as the creation of a vacancy to be filled by a new appointment, and the proposed bill was intended to secure the professed purpose of the original law by confining the vacation of the office to actual delinquents. The repeal bill did not become a law. The evil had already taken the deep root which Mr. Madison apprehended. On the 9th of January, 1835, Mr. Calhoun, in his famous report upon the extent of executive patronage, again proposed the repeal of the four-years' act, declaring that the "great and alarming strides" which executive patronage had taken since the report of 1826 made the repeal imperative.

The debate that followed in the Senate is memorable for the fact that Mr. Webster and Mr. Calhoun both arrayed themselves against Mr. Madison upon the constitutional point of the sole executive power of removal. But they both agreed with Mr. Madison in condemning the four years' law, yet not for his reasons. While he laid chief stress upon the dangerous opportunity which it opened to the Senate, they saw mainly the perilous enlargement of executive power. They were both right. The law

stimulated both senatorial intrigue and executive ambition, because of the association of the Senate and the executive in the appointing power. Mr. Webster did not deny that some benefit had been derived from the law, but he thought that the evil results were much greater, and he described plainly and strongly the demoralization and degradation produced by it. The law itself vacates the office, and gives the President the means of rewarding a favorite without exercising the power of removal. It thus enables him to displace a satisfactory officer without the responsibility or odium of dismissing him. The congressional decision of 1789, which gave the sole power of removal to the President, required positive executive action to cause a vacancy. The law of 1820 vacated all the chief financial offices, with all the places dependent upon them, that is, practically it vacated the entire civil service of the country during the term of every president, who without an order of removal could fill every place, small or large, from Katahdin to Santa Barbara, from the mouth of the Columbia to the keys of Florida, at his pleasure. In contemplating the possible results of so vast a power, Mr. Calhoun said in 1835 that, if it should ever deal with a corps of a hundred thousand officeholders, the friends of liberty might surrender in despair, for the people could not resist them for six months. Mr. Calhoun's gloomy forecast was unjust to the people. The corps that he foresaw has increased far beyond a hundred thousand. But the people have seen the nature and consequences of the despotism founded upon a patronage so enormous, and have already begun to overthrow it.

There has been no later attempt than that of Mr. Calhoun to repeal the four-years' law. The abuse of patronage which was so

loudly derided by the whigs during the administration of Jackson and Van Buren was adopted by them upon their success in 1840, and it rapidly became the accepted tradition until at last it was held to be indispensable to government by party. The repeal of the four-years' law was sought no longer, because the law proved to be one of the most convenient means of the prostitution of the public service to personal and party ends, and, as patronage grew, the control of politics by the office-holding interest became more and more organized into a system which destroys legitimate party action and corrupts the government at its very source in the primary meetings of the people.

As the country extended and the number of offices necessarily increased, it is curious that the dangers which necessarily spring from a vast executive patronage did not alarm the sons of fathers who had seen such patronage to be the untiring foe of their liberty and independence. But their grandsons at least are aroused. They see that the absolute dependence of the great army of employes of the government upon personal favor instead of faithful discharge of duty, creates an enormous danger to republican institutions. They see that personal favoritism is the tap root of the evil to be reformed, and, to destroy that, they have approved the Pendleton bill. But the fixed limited term which is provided by the four-years' bill immensely strengthens the evils of personal favoritism. The limited term fosters utter servility and lack of self-respect, because reappointment depends not upon official fidelity and efficiency, but upon personal favor. The incumbent cannot be properly devoted to his duty, since it is necessary to propitiate the influence which can secure reappointment. The applicant is equally busy in seeking similar influence to obtain the

place, and, as fixed terms are constantly expiring, the wretched and demoralizing contest is perpetually raging.

The repeal of the four-years' law, therefore, is an essential step toward the complete correction of the personal and partisan prostitution of the public service which is the object of this league. It is simply a return to the constitutional theory of the framers of the government and to the constitutional practice of the early administrations. It is, further, in complete accord with the measures which have already been adopted in swift and strict deference to the demand of the country. The Pendleton bill provides a method of subordinate appointment which is intended to discard personal favoritism as the basis of the public service and to open the service to all citizens who shall prove their fitness for it. The fundamental principle of the bill is that public employment of every kind and degree is a public trust, and that the public interest requires only that the trust be discharged honestly, economically, and efficiently. But, in the great multitude of minor ministerial employments, this is impossible under a system of arbitrary removal, and the evil is practically the same whether the removal is effected by personal whim, or supposed party interest, or by the regular course of law.

Yet our position on the subject of removal must be clearly understood. In urging the repeal of the four-years' law, we advocate the constitutional tenure and nothing more. We do not plead for fixed permanence in public place, nor assert a vested right in public employment. Due subordination and discipline are essential to all effective organized service, and, therefore, dismissal for proper cause should be prompt and sure. To this end the power of removal should be left as free as possible, provided that

motives for its illegitimate exercise are destroyed. Such a provision secures both proper discipline and a just tenure. The vital condition of efficient devotion to duty in the employments which we have in view is that such diligence is the tenure of the place. This is the condition of private service. No employè in a business house or company pretends to hold a vested right to his place. He may be dismissed at any moment. But he knows that he will not be dismissed so long as he serves faithfully. This conviction is the main-spring of good service. Men remain in the same business employment for 30 or 40 years, not because of any prescribed life term, but because of valuable service. Idle, dissolute, dishonest men are dismissed as soon as they are discovered. But the private employer who should insist upon rotation in place, who should dismiss competent and experienced clerks for no other reason than that they had served in his counting-room for six months or six years, and because there were other persons in the world who might prove to be equally competent, or because he feared that they might come to think that they had acquired a vested right to their places, would be a fit subject for the writ *de lunatico*. In the transaction of the public as of private business, if the object be good service, a fixed term, unless reappointment is sure to follow good conduct, is absurd and necessarily demoralizing.

But if merit secures continuance, the limitation of term is mere folly. The plea for the four-years' law upon which the sound practice of more than 30 years was disturbed, was that accounting officers would be more careful in the discharge of duty if their offices should be vacated by law every four years. Such a plea, however, assumed that they would be careful because care

would secure reappointment. According to this reasoning there would be no inducement to be careful if experience should prove, as it has now proved, that the utmost fitness, long experience, and tried ability did not secure reappointment, and that the fixed term was held to be the rightful measure of the claim to public employment. The argument was that the term was limited in order to make the officer more careful. The fact was that the utmost care did not save him from dismissal at the end of his term. A year ago Mr. Butterworth of Ohio, in an elaborate speech in the House of Representatives, declared that only 49 removals had been made during the nine months of the administration. Upon looking at the figures it appeared, as I said here at the time, that of 825 officers whose terms had expired, the President had reappointed 428 and had not reappointed 397. By Mr. Butterworth's own showing, therefore, nearly 50 per cent. of the officers whose terms had expired had been dropped from the service. If they were unfit, they should have been dismissed without awaiting the end of their terms. If they were fit, they had been dismissed merely because their terms had expired. In what way can such treatment be held to be an incentive to a more careful discharge of duty? The pretense is absurd. However honestly the four-years' law may have been passed, it has resulted not in securing greater official diligence, but in enabling the executive to traffic in patronage without the odium of removal.

The particular argument for the fixed term in the case of collecting and disbursing officers has been expanded into a general assertion that security of official tenure tends to carelessness, laziness, insolence, and inefficiency. The reply to this assertion is obvious and conclusive. If the security be based upon a right of

property in the office, of which the incumbent can be dispossessed only by a process equivalent to a trial in the courts, there is reason in the argument. But it is totally inapplicable to a security of tenure which depends wholly upon good conduct and upon the satisfaction of a superior officer who has no illegitimate motive for dismissal. Negligence and insolence may be expected in an office the chief of which knows that every clerk under him was placed at his desk by a personal influence which the chief does not dare to defy. But negligence and insolence are not probable in an office in which the chief stands in no fear of personal influence and depends for his own security upon the good work of his office. To the whole system of removal by lawsuit we are—if I may speak for the league—resolutely opposed. Having annulled all reason for the improper exercise of the power of dismissal, we hold that it is better to take the risk of occasional injustice from passion and prejudice, which no law or regulation can control, than to seal up incompetency, negligence, insubordination, insolence, and every other mischief in the service, by requiring a virtual trial at law before an unfit or incapable clerk can be removed.

The scheme of rotation in office presupposes that a republican system requires that every man shall be employed by the government for a certain limited period; or it asserts that continuous service is incompatible with free popular institutions and tends to monarchy. But no scheme of rotation could be devised to give public employment to every citizen. The truth which is smothered under the demagogue's cry of rotation in office is this: That in a republican government it is desirable constantly to bring the fresh intelligence and ability of the people into the direction of public

affairs. This is undeniable. And it is because the spoils system arbitrarily excludes this intelligence and ability from every branch of the public service that it is dangerous to republican government. But to secure the constant reinvigoration of the government by fresh talent and energy, to effect such changes of representatives and of policy as the country may desire, the national and state constitutions make ample provision by requiring frequent elections of legislative and chief executive officers. By entrusting to those officers the selection of subordinate ministerial employés, the constitutions assume that such selections and dismissals will be made solely with a view to efficient service. The public hold upon such employés of every kind is through the elective officers who appoint them. But the public interest in them is solely that they shall be appointed and removed in the way least harmful to the public service and to the general welfare. It is for this reason that when, as in a recent case, a high appointing officer, the commissioner of internal revenue, misused his authority by removing an admirable subordinate to make place for a favorite, a powerful demand was properly made in the press that the President should dismiss the officer who had flagrantly abused his official trust to the injury of the public service and the discredit of the government. The universal public attention which is now directed to such acts, and the sharp censure with which they are exposed and condemned, is but one of the illustrations of the general determination that the system which inevitably breeds such abuses shall be reformed.

In moving for the repeal of the four-years' law, upon which subject Mr. Whitridge of the New York association has prepared a brief and cogent pamphlet which should be generally circulated,

we shall carry our appeal, as in all our action, to the great American tribunal, the intelligence of the people. If any body of citizens in the country have reason to trust that intelligence, it is the civil-service reformers. The history of American politics is most encouraging for every man who holds firmly to the American principle, because it shows that reliance upon the popular reason and conscience, and not flattery of popular passion and ignorance and prejudice, is the royal road of progress. Every great reform indeed can wait, because no reform is effective or assured until it rests upon the public conviction, and, in the part that the league has taken honorably to produce that conviction, it has had no reason for doubt or dismay, but every reason for hope and good cheer. In the task that yet lies before it, it will depend upon the same popular patriotism, sagacity, and courage which have achieved the remarkable victories of this year. The watchword of the hour is the famous order of the German marshal. Amid the smoke and roar of the battle as his blazing lines steadily advanced, the old soldier placidly took snuff and said quietly to his officers, "Patience, gentlemen, and forward!"

Upon the conclusion of the address, which was received with much applause, the delegates adjourned to the Committee rooms, where they were called to order by the President. The following named gentlemen appeared as representatives of various Associations:

Boston: William Simes, H. W. Chaplin, Arthur Hobart, William V. Kellen, George Wigglesworth.

Brookline, Mass.: E. S. Philbrick, C. C. Soule, Theodore Lyman.

Brooklyn, N. Y.: Frederic Cromwell, Alexander Forman,
John M. Comstock.

Buffalo, N. Y.: Sherman S. Rogers, Henry W. Sprague.

Cambridge, Mass.: Morrill Wyman, Jr., William W.
Vaughan.

Dedham, Mass.: Frederic J. Stimson.

Deering, Me.: H. T. Blackstone, Edward P. Payson.

Fifth Cong. Dist., Mass.: George V. Leverett, George G.
Wright, Archibald M. Howe.

Geneva, N. Y.: Francis P. Nash.

Malden, Mass.: William B. De las Casas.

Maryland: Charles J. Bonaparte, George S. Brown.

Missouri: Henry Hitchcock, Charles E. Briggs.

New Haven, Conn.: E. S. Wheeler, Professor Henry W.
Farnam.

Newport, R. I.: Edmund Tweedy, Rowland G. Hazard,
Charles W. Wendté, Charles A. Ives.

Newton, Mass.: Henry Lambert, James P. Tolman.

New York: George William Curtis, William Potts, Everett
P. Wheeler, Silas W. Burt, D. B. St. John Roosa, Charles Collins.

Philadelphia: William W. Montgomery, James F. Young,
Edward S. Sayres, J. G. Rosengarten, Robert Adams, Jr.,
R. Francis Wood, Charles Wheeler, Frederic Collins.

Portland, Me.: Edward C. Jordan.

Providence, R. I.: L. F. C. Garvin.

Westchester County, N. Y.: Frederic William Holls.

Willimantic, Conn.: George A. Conant.

Wollaston, Mass.: Josiah Quincy.

The Secretary presented the Annual Report of the Treasurer as follows :

Balance on hand July 31, 1882,		\$ 442.42
Receipts from Associations,	\$ 14.20	
" " Individuals,	31.00	
" for Documents Sold,	150.14	
Loans from New York Association,	400.00	595.34
		<hr/>
		\$1037.76

Disbursements.

For Printing,	\$552.82	
" Expense of Annual Meeting 1882,	26.50	
" Stenographer,	17.50	
" Rent of Committee Meeting Room,	7.00	
" Civil-Service Record,	20.75	
" Expenses of Committee in Washington,	142.05	
" Mailing Documents,	18.45	
" Miscellaneous Expenses,	75.60	860.67
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Balance remaining on hand July 31, 1883,		\$177.09

Mr. Cromwell moved that the President appoint a committee to audit the account. The motion was adopted, and the President named Messrs. Cromwell and Hobart, who subsequently reported that they had compared the account with the vouchers and found it to be correct.

The election of President being the next regular order, Mr. Curtis was nominated. There being no other nomination, upon motion of Mr. Holls the Secretary was directed to deposit one ballot for Mr. George William Curtis, who was unanimously re-elected amid general applause.

Mr. Henry Hitchcock of St. Louis offered a resolution in favor of the repeal of the act of 1820 and other acts limiting the term of certain offices to four years. In advocating the resolution Mr. Hitchcock said that, after the able address of the President, any discussion of the subject seemed hardly necessary. Mr. Montgomery of Philadelphia referred to the bill for the repeal of the act of 1820, presented at the last session of Congress by Mr. Gibson of Louisiana. After some verbal changes had been made, the resolution was adopted in the following form :

“Resolved, That, in the opinion of this League, it is indispensable to a complete reform of the civil service that Congress should repeal the Act of May 15, 1820, and acts supplementary thereto, now embodied in sections 769, 1864, 2217, 2244, 2613, and 3830 of the Revised Statutes of the United States, by which the tenure of administrative offices was fixed at four years, for the purpose and with the effect of creating periodical vacancies in said offices to be filled by the appointing power. The practice of rotation in office thus introduced into the subordinate civil service, by what Mr. Jefferson at the time denounced as ‘a mischievous law,’ and as a baneful source of intrigue and corruption, is foreign alike to republican principles and to sound business methods. To the Executive, it secures the partisan advantages, while enabling him to escape the odium and the responsibility, of arbitrary and causeless removals from office. To the faithful public servant, the menace of partisan attack is only postponed, not averted; while the temptation to abuse the appointing power for partisan ends still remains, even though restrained in part by the present civil service rules. We therefore advocate, as the next urgent step in this reform, a return to the early practice of the government; under which, while no right or property in any office was recognized, nor any life or permanent tenure was created, the fidelity and good behavior of public servants, as in the case of private agents, was made the sole condition of the continuance of their employment. And it is recommended to all civil service associations throughout the country that they make strenuous and unceasing effort in the direction of this further and most necessary reform, and the executive committee of the League is hereby authorized and directed to take such action as they may find expedient and practicable in aid of legislation in the sense of this resolution.”

Mr. Everett P. Wheeler of New York offered a resolution embodying the views of some of the friends of reform, touching the extension of the methods of a reformed civil service to the State and municipalities, saying :

“ In presenting this resolution for the consideration of the League, allow me to add one or two considerations which seem to me to argue very strongly in favor of its adoption. I think the resolution does not go too far in stating that the evils of the spoils system have been quite as great in municipal administration as they have been in the Federal Government. I think perhaps it might be said without going too far that they have been greater, that the expenditure of money in our cities, money raised by taxation, has been wasteful and extravagant, and appointments to office have been made with less regard for the public welfare in our cities than they have in our national government. The eyes of the whole community have been turned more intently on the management of federal affairs than generally on the management of local affairs. I think, too, that there are many whose sympathies have not been strongly with us as yet, who took little interest in the reform in federal politics, who possibly thought there was less occasion for it, who would be very strongly enlisted in our different associations in the movement for reform in our municipal affairs; and no doubt there are branches of the public service of the States of which the same may be said. In the State of New York certainly there are some branches of the public service which require, even *demand*, the consideration of thoughtful men; and, if I remember rightly, it is the only State in the Union which still retains in the hands of public officials the management of public channels of trade. If I am not mistaken, the canals built by other States have been relegated to the control of private corporations; but, as you are aware, in the State of New York the canals still remain under the control of the State administration. But, in other States, the prisons, the hospitals, and the asylums afford in the first place an opportunity for patronage; and, in the second place, for the expenditure of large sums of public money. It is of the first importance for the welfare of our country, and particularly as our civilization is constantly becoming more complex, that these institutions should be managed most efficiently and most honestly. In the more populous cities, the criminal classes, as we are beginning to call them,

are constantly becoming a source of greater apprehension and alarm. It is of the first importance to the welfare of our people in the future that judicious measures should be adopted, not simply for the punishment, but for the prevention, of crime. As long as it is possible for the inmates of those institutions to see, as in many instances they have been able to see, that the management by the State is not free from dishonesty, that the management of directors, or of their officers, is corrupt, so long will it be impossible that any attempts made in those institutions for the moral reformation or improvement of their inmates should have any considerable success. You cannot have good fruits from a corrupt tree. The necessity for reform is one which commends itself; it seems to me, to the mind of every thoughtful man. And it is in undertaking this particular work that we shall enlist the sympathies of charitable economists and tax-payers who frown on the undue expenditure of public money; and we shall continue to have the sympathy and support of those who have been in the movement from the beginning from other considerations than those to which I have adverted. Now it is true that, as a League, we cannot undertake to say to any particular association that this or that ought to be done; but it is of great importance as a League that we should say to all the associations in all the States that they should think nothing done as long as anything remains to be done; that, as long as scandals exist in local matters, they should call for support and enlist local interest and pride; and that thus, while we do not undertake to dictate to local associations what particular interest they shall espouse, we assemble here that we may properly urge on all the associations to do all in their power, that each do all in its power, to promote the reform in this direction. For these reasons, I beg to submit for the consideration of the League the resolution which I had the honor to read."

The subject was further discussed by Messrs. Howe, Rosengarten, and Adams. Senator Adams of Pennsylvania objected to the resolution on the ground that it seemed to interfere with local affairs. In the course of his remarks Mr. Adams stated that the Pennsylvania civil service bill was defeated in the House because it appropriated \$3,000 per annum to provide a system which applied to only about sixty officials. It never reached the Senate.

It having been shown that the resolution offered by Mr. Wheeler only proposed that associations should work in their own several spheres, and that the character of municipal administration bears with great weight upon that of the national administration, after some slight amendments the resolution was adopted in form as follows :

“Resolved, That the principles of the Pendleton bill ought to be applied to the civil service of the States and cities of this country. The perversion of patronage, the use of public trusts for private ends, the making appointments to office for reasons of personal friendship or as a reward for public services, are evils as flagrant and as harmful in local administration as they have been in that of the federal government. These crimes against the people are especially to be condemned when committed, as they often have been, in the management of public charitable and penal institutions, in which many times incompetent or corrupt officials have made the poor and friendless a prey. We recommend to the associations throughout the country never to relax their efforts within their several States until these shameful abuses are corrected by law, remembering that the influence of local politics extends itself to the nation, and that the caucus in towns and cities has often been the training-school for men who have held high place in the national administration.”

Mr. Potts proposed the following amendment to Article 3 of the Constitution, which was unanimously adopted :

To add after the words “members thereof,” in the first clause of the Third Section, the following words: “Any association hereafter expressing such willingness shall become a member of the League upon its being accepted as such by the League or the Executive Committee,” so that the provision may stand —

“The League shall consist of all the Civil-Service Reform Associations in the United States which signify their willingness to become members thereof. Any association hereafter expressing such willingness shall become a member of the League upon its being accepted as such by the League or the Executive Committee.”

Mr. Cromwell of Brooklyn offered the following, which was unanimously adopted :

“Resolved, That we congratulate the associations which form this League and the entire country upon the passage of a bill by the national Congress for the improvement of the civil service, and at the same time express our cordial recognition of the action of the President, both in the promulgation of suitable rules and regulations for carrying on the work under said Act, and in the appointment of competent and efficient commissioners to direct that work.”

Mr. Cromwell then offered a resolution touching the action taken by the Legislature of the State of New York, upon the wording of which considerable discussion arose, which was participated in by Messrs. Wheeler, Garvin, Rosengarten, Cromwell, Adams, and Nash.

MR. WHEELER said: “I will make a single observation in regard to the character of the civil service of the State. The investigations of the commission have shown that between eighteen hundred and two thousand persons are in the service of the State of New York to whom the compulsory provisions of its civil service act apply, and who are to be classified under it and whose appointments are regulated by the rules adopted by the commission; and the charitable institutions are part, the canals are another part, and so are the other public works under the general control of State officers.

“Then, in reference to municipal affairs, one thing may be said: that our experience in the city of New York has impressed us very strongly as to the wisdom of the action of this Association in regard to the measures which it would recommend. We have been engaged in reforming our municipal charter and civil service for more than twenty years, and generally taken the direction of confirming the tenure of office of the officials, and there has sprung up from that the practice which you, sir, so keenly satirized in your address this morning,—removal from office by trial, under which practice the official was made to appear as if charged with a crime. He has all the rights of a culprit, is defended by counsel, produces witnesses, etc., and the effect of this is practically to make his removal almost impossible. And, while per-

haps those evils are less than indiscriminate removals and the appointment of persons for purely political reasons in their places, yet, certainly, it is a very bad way of remedying the difficulty and has worked very much to the detriment of our public service; and I am convinced we are beginning to feel in that city that we began at the wrong end. We should have done better if we had done as the League recommended to the Federal Congress. The most important point to be secured is entrance to the public service; and, if you remove the temptation to incompetent appointments, you remove the temptation to partisan removals. That having been our experience in the past, we are now trying at the other end; and we are very confident we shall secure at no distant day from the Mayor of the city the promulgation of rules which shall regulate the appointment to all branches of the public service of the city so far as he can under this bill. The evil of the division of responsibility has been felt in that city. While the Mayor is nominally head, there rests in the head of each department an authority not to be overcome. The further we have departed from the original provision of the Federal Constitution, the further we have gone from that model, the further we have gone astray. The simplicity of the Federal Constitution giving the President the power of appointment and making him responsible for the due performance of the executive functions is one reason why, in spite of all evils we have had to contend with, the civil service of the country has, on the whole, been conducted with a very reasonable degree of honesty and efficiency. It seems to me that if our endeavor in our different localities took that form, of bringing that pattern of our local administration in the cities to conform to the pattern that our fathers adopted at the formation of the Federal Constitution,—the giving to the heads of the cities a greater power in relation to the administration of their duties and greater control over their subordinates,—we should secure a much more efficient and economical administration of municipal affairs. I do not know that I ought to have said all this, yet I felt I could not refrain, in view of what was said by the gentleman who spoke before me."

MR. GARVIN, of Providence, R. I., said: "While I agree with the spirit of the resolution, and think well of the bill, and that we should labor for it, still the number of exceptions made by the bill is a serious consideration. For instance, it excepts the police, health, educational, and law departments of the city.

These would seem to include large numbers of some of the most important branches of the city government. Take, for instance, that of the police department. It would seem as though that was most necessary to be dealt with. All know, who have had anything to do with the government, that one of the defects in government, State and municipal, is in the execution of the law. The very great difficulty and farce, in fact, is made of legislation by the fact that laws are not executed. We get together in the assemblies and quibble over the wordings of the law; and yet we know that, whether one or the other wording is adopted, neither will be executed. This, I say, is a farce; and it seems as though the department of police, coming in contact with the criminal class and subject to so many perilous influences in the election of officers, should be influenced especially by civil service rules, that the recommendation upon which a mayor makes an appointment should come, not from the managers of the parties, but from a responsible board, all whose acts and recommendations are known to the public. And, then, if an error is made on the part of the Mayor, he shall be held responsible for it. I think in this and some other departments this bill should not be considered a model."

Mr. Cromwell's resolution having been again read, Mr. Wheeler said :

"I am glad of what has been said by Mr. Garvin, because I think it is desirable to hear the objections which arise with the discussion of this subject, that we may enter into detail, so that gentlemen from different parts of the country may express their convictions in matters of this sort. Take New York, for example, in which this bill was adopted. Many of us would have been glad to make that eighth section apply to all departments in the different municipalities, but we were met with this difficulty; and it was one that sprung up in the last thirty years, growing out of the necessity felt for somewhat restraining the power of removal. In New York thirty years ago there was an almost unrestrained power of removal in the Mayor, and it was found that that power was abused for partisan purposes. Then the legislature made an act to restrict the power of the Mayor, and to give similar power to the heads of the departments that in the first place were appointed by the legislature. That caused a great deal of discussion;

and various other devices were resorted to,—non-partisan boards created, etc.,—but the general character of each scheme in that regard was to give to the head of the department, or heads where there was a commission at the head, the control of its own department, so that the city government was made up of a congeries of a half-dozen or more independent systems. Some of us thought that that system was so bad that it was wise to try to reform it. Others thought it was not expedient to undertake it at that time, and were only willing to give to the Mayor in some cases and to heads of departments the power to remove under the civil service rules. Although some who were heard before the committees were frank to say that if the legislature would go further it would meet with approval, yet it did not. I concur entirely that it would be wise to go further. I think that is one of the steps we shall have to take in the future, to harmonize and unify the service of the State and other States. The police commissioners now have power to regulate admission to the police department and make rules for the purpose, and thereby come to some extent under the jurisdiction of the State Commissioner. Now the time will come, perhaps, in this city, when those commissioners will be more under the power of the Mayor than now, and he will be authorized to regulate those appointments; and that will be a step in the direction of good government. In regard to making the rules of the State compulsory on the authorities of such cities among them, it was considered, but it seemed impracticable to get it through the legislature in that form; and a bill for that purpose was introduced in the legislature, but failed to secure passage; so, on the whole, this was the best thing we could get through; and we were willing to take all we could get. We want all this civil service reform we can get. I should be very sorry to have gentlemen from other States think that this particular section of the bill was a model. It was adopted to our peculiar needs and circumstances; but we do not at all set it up as a model for imitations, but simply are glad to have the Association congratulate us on what we have done."

The resolution was amended in several particulars to meet the objections which had been raised, and it was finally adopted in the following form :

"Resolved, That we view with great satisfaction legislation in the State

of New York for the improvement of civil service in that State and its principal municipalities, and hope that the principles underlying that action will be extended within that State and that appropriate legislation may be had in other States of the Union; and,

“*Resolved* further that we recognize with pleasure the prompt action of the Governor of New York under the bill, and the highly satisfactory appointments of the commissioners and chief examiner pursuant to the provisions thereof.”

Upon motion of Mr. Sherman S. Rogers, the thanks of the League were unanimously tendered to the authorities of the Channing Memorial Church and to the local association for their courtesy and hospitality.

Mr. Rosengarten moved that the thanks of the League be tendered to Messrs. Eaton and Wheeler for their active and efficient efforts in promoting the passage by Congress of the Reform bill. The motion was unanimously adopted.

Mr. Hobart, of Boston, presented the following resolution, which was also unanimously adopted :

“*Resolved*, That, in order to promote the usefulness of the *Civil Service Record*, and to make it a more perfect chronicle of the reform movement in all sections of the country, every association be requested by the Secretary of the League to appoint a committee whose duty it shall be to send to the editors of the *Record*, on the last day of each month, such information as to the work of the associations, as to civil service examinations in their respective localities, and as to political events,—such as resolutions of conventions, appointments, dismissals, views of candidates, etc.,—bearing upon the work of reform, as shall be suitable for publication in the *Record*.”

Mr. Potts, on behalf of the Buffalo Association, urged the liberal support, by subscriptions and otherwise, of the *Record* as a useful instrument in promoting the good cause. Mr. Rogers also made some remarks upon this point.

Mr. A. M. Howe moved that a committee of three be named to consider the question of municipal appointments.

Mr. Leverett of Cambridge, Mass., gave notice of two prizes of \$100 and \$50 which are offered by the Cambridge Association for short essays on the best methods of appointing executive officers, of selecting laborers, and of the terms and tenure of municipal officers.

In the course of the discussion Mr. Cromwell of Brooklyn remarked :

"I want to say that all the cardinal virtues are now centred in Brooklyn. The good fruits of good government abound there ; and if our friends want a good charter for a city, if they want to know what a good Mayor is, if they want to see clean things everywhere, a total putting away of the old dirt they used to see about the City Hall, they should come to Brooklyn. (applause). I think from what I have read of the history of municipal government in Pennsylvania, it would do our Pennsylvania friends good to come over there. (Laughter and applause)."

It was stated that a committee had been appointed by the Massachusetts League to investigate and report upon the subject now under discussion. Further remarks were made by Messrs. Quincy, Holls, Lambert, and Wyman, and the matter was finally referred to the Executive Committee, with power.

Upon motion of Mr. Wheeler the thanks of the League were unanimously tendered to the President for his admirable and comprehensive address, and the meeting then adjourned *sine die*.

Attest,

WILLIAM POTTS,

Secretary.

PROCEEDINGS

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF

The National Civil-Service Reform League

HELD AT

NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND. AUGUST 6; 1884,

WITH THE ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

HON. GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS

NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED FOR THE

NATIONAL CIVIL-SERVICE REFORM LEAGUE,

1884.

PRESS OF
WILLIAM S. GOTTSBERGER,
11 Murray St., New York.

ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE
NATIONAL CIVIL-SERVICE REFORM LEAGUE.
AUGUST 6, 1884.

Pursuant to call duly issued, the fourth annual meeting of the National Civil-Service Reform League was held at Newport, Rhode Island, on Wednesday, August 6, 1884, at 11:30 A.M., in the Channing Memorial Church, which was kindly offered for the occasion by the trustees of the church. Seventeen Associations were directly represented by delegates as follows:

Boston, Mass.: James M. Bugbee, Arthur Hobart, William V. Kellen, Bancroft C. Davis, Charles R. Codman.

Brooklyn, N. Y.: William Cary Sanger, William Potts.

Buffalo, N. Y.: E. C. Sprague, Ansley Wilcox.

Cambridge, Mass.: W. W. Vaughan.

Dedham, Mass.: S. C. Beach.

Fifth Congressional District, Mass.: George V. Leverett.

Malden, Mass.: William B. de las Casas.

Maryland, Charles J. Bonaparte, George B. Cole.

Missouri: Charles Speck, Charles E. Briggs.

New Haven, Conn.: George D. Miller.

Newport, R. I.: Charles W. Wendte, Edmund Tweedy.

Newton, Mass.: Henry Lambert, James P. Tolman.

New York, N. Y.: Everett P. Wheeler, R. R. Bowker,
Jacob F. Miller, O. B. Potter, Cornelius B. Smith, George
Wm. Curtis.

Norwich, Conn.: William Appleton Aiken.

Providence, R. I.: L. F. C. Garvin, Amasa M. Eaton,
Howard M. Rice.

Philadelphia, Pa.: R. Francis Wood, Lincoln L. Eyre,
Francis Hazen Cope.

Westchester Co., N. Y.: Frederick W. Holls.

A general invitation was extended to such as desired to listen to the address of Mr. George William Curtis, the President of the League, and the church was well filled by an intelligent and appreciative audience. Mr. Curtis spoke as follows:

THE YEAR'S WORK

IN

Civil-Service Reform.

AT the last annual meeting of the National civil-service reform league, two resolutions were unanimously adopted which announced the special objects to be sought by the league and the friends of reform during the year now ended. One of the resolutions recommended to all the reform associations in the country to make strenuous and unceasing efforts to secure the repeal of the laws of the United States which fix the tenure of certain administrative offices at four years. The other resolution urged the associations to spare no efforts to procure the passage of laws extending the principles of the reform bill to the civil service of the states and cities of the country. It is now my duty to report to you what progress has been made in accomplishing these results.

The limitations imposed by the law of 1820 and by the subsequent acts upon the term of certain offices, was an abandonment of the practice that prevailed during the first 30 years of the government, and the change was introduced for the purpose of vacating the offices that they might be filled by the appointing

power. It was intended to facilitate the prostitution of the public service to personal and party ends, and the result has fully proved the sagacity of the political schemers who designed the law. Six years after the law was passed, a special committee of the Senate declared that it defeated its own professed object by turning out faithful officers instead of retaining them. That is to say, it defeated its professed purpose by accomplishing its real purpose. It did not improve the public service of the country, but it greatly benefited the private service of the politicians who controlled the patronage. The law of 1820 and the subsequent acts vacate during every presidential term the offices upon which the vast multitude of minor places in the public service depend, and, as re-appointment is not necessarily secured by official fidelity and efficiency, but is determined by personal and political favor and intrigue, the public employè is naturally engaged in propitiating the influence which can retain him in place. This is one of the most obvious ways in which the spoils system strikes at the self-respect of the public employè, and at the same time influences the zeal of the office-seeker to cultivate a still stronger influence to thrust the incumbent from his position.

In accordance with the recommendation of the National league, the reasons of the proposed action were submitted to the country. When Congress met in December a bill repealing the acts in question was introduced in both houses, and petitions signed by eminent citizens were presented from various states asking the passage of the bill. The appeal was pressed before the committee of the House with ample knowledge, eloquence, and ability by committees of the league and of local associations who went to Washington for the purpose, and the passage of the bill

repealing the four years' tenure was unanimously recommended to the House by the committee on reform in the civil service.

Meanwhile signs of some reaction of feeling upon the subject naturally appeared. At the opening of the session of Congress, both Houses in filling the minor positions in their service utterly disregarded the fundamental principle of the reform bill which they had passed a year before. This action was followed early in the session by two propositions introduced in the House of Representatives to repeal the law, and at the same time Mr. Pendleton, whose name is honorably associated with the reform bill, was defeated in the Legislature of Ohio for reelection to the Senate of the United States. His advocacy of reform was one of the objections which were warmly urged against him; and his successful competitor, in a public speech after his election, showed his utter want of sympathy with the reform spirit, as well as his total ignorance of the practical methods and scope of the reformed system. Such re-actionary tendencies, however, are not surprising, nor are they discouraging. There are always bats and owls overtaken by the rising sun, but, despite their blinking and hooting and fluttering, the sun "goes marching on."

It was on the 21st of April that Mr. Mutchler of Pennsylvania moved in the House of Representatives to suspend the rules to take up the bill to repeal the four years' law, which was unanimously recommended by the committee on reform in the civil service. Mr. McMillin of Tennessee opposed the repeal on the ground that the tenure of office act requiring the consent of the Senate for the removal of an officer would create a life tenure, and Mr. McMillin deprecated a life tenure as intolerable, arguing that if an officer be faithful it is but little trouble to reappoint him, but

if he is not faithful, he thought that his term of service should be allowed to expire, and that then without any executive act he should be dropped from the service. It seemed not to have occurred to Mr. McMillin that, if it be little trouble to reappoint such an officer, it is still less trouble to leave him undisturbed until there is some proper reason for disturbing him. Nor did Mr. McMillin appear to see clearly that the executive oath honestly to enforce the laws requires not that an unfaithful officer should be allowed to serve out his term, but that he should be peremptorily dismissed as soon as his unfaithfulness is known. The abuse of the four years' law is not that inefficient officers are suffered to drop from the service at the end of their terms, but that efficient officers are dropped when their terms end, and, although it is but little trouble to renominate them, they are not renominated, because their places are wanted not for the public advantage but for party or personal profit. And it is for the very reason that this wrong is effected without any executive act of removal that the repeal of the law is sought, in order that the responsibility for the removal of faithful officers shall rest in the eyes of the country where it belongs, upon the appointing power. The present laws serve the purpose for which they were designed, namely, to place all the officers at the disposition of the president and to enable him for any political or personal purpose, noiselessly and without an order of removal, to dismiss any officer, however faithful, capable, and experienced he may be. There is no more ingenious device than the four-years' law for promoting, as Mr. Jefferson said, intrigue and corruption, and the constant and demoralizing greed of place. Having earnestly protested against the repeal and warned the House against a life tenure, Mr. McMillen concluded by de-

claring that nobody was more anxious for a true civil-service reform than he.

Mr. Willis of Kentucky, who introduced the bill and who has taken a conspicuous and effective part in reform legislation, replied forcibly to Mr. McMillen that the theory of a life tenure was wholly chimerical, and that, even were it not so, it was an objection inapplicable to places in the service which are not political. He showed that all the offices affected by the repeal are entirely non-political, and that nobody was able to say, and never had anybody been able to say, why honest, capable, and faithful public servants should be turned adrift at the end of four years. No reason, indeed, could be given except that, under the abuses of the spoils system, such ministerial places have been regarded not as public trusts but as bribes to secure partisan service. Mr. Willis stated the simple truth that the repeal does not reverse the settled policy of administration. On the contrary it removes flagrant abuses that have destroyed the original constitutional practice, and restores the policy of Washington and the founders of the government. Mr. Springer of Illinois opposed especially the provisions of the bills which authorized the judges of the supreme court in the territories to hold during good behavior or until the territory shall be admitted as a state. Mr. Springer's speech was evidently only a partisan appeal, and was of no weight whatever. Mr. Dibble of South Carolina argued that the patronage of the executive now placed in the hands of one man power too great for a republican form of government, but he opposed the repeal of the four-years' term, although it necessarily increases the danger of that power by facilitating its abuse. He thought, however, that a term of seven years would promote genuine civil-service reform. But the

argument for a term of seven years, which is that it would tend to prevent mere political removals, is a stronger argument for the repeal of all fixed terms for merely ministerial places. Mr. Holman of Indiana saw no hope for reform in the civil service until the salaries of public officers are made to correspond to those which are paid in private employments. Mr. Holman's chief argument, however, was that upon 'which the four-years' bill was originally justified; namely, the desirability of the stated closing and public scrutiny of all public accounts, and the moral effect upon the officer of the knowledge that his reappointment and continuance in office will depend upon the proof of his perfect integrity and capability and promptness in the administration of his trust. Mr. Holman was apparently unaware that, six years after the passage of the law, the select committee of the Senate reported that the results which Mr. Holman described as those which the bill would secure were not secured, and that the expiration of the term had already come to be regarded as the creation of a vacancy to be filled by a new appointment. Nine years later, in 1835, Mr. Webster declared the evil results of the law to be much greater than any advantages which had been derived from it, and with Clay, Calhoun, Benton, Ewing, Southard, White, and other eminent leaders of both parties, he warmly advocated repeal. Mr. Holman also deprecated a life tenure, and was followed by Mr. Finalay of Maryland, who read an admirable letter from George S. Cole, secretary of the civil-service reform association of that State, and on behalf of the executive committee, urging the general argument in favor of reform.

The debate was fitly closed by Theodore Lyman of Massachusetts, the first member of Congress ever elected upon the dis-

tinct issue of civil-service reform. In a brief speech he argued cogently that, having provided that merely ministerial places shall be filled by proved fitness, it was now necessary to make chief appointing officers strictly responsible and accountable. This result is effected by giving them the power of removal and taking from them the temptation to abuse the power. But the four-years' act interferes with this power, because under that act it is held, as Mr. McMillen argued, that a man shall be allowed to serve out his prescribed term unless his conduct is absolutely intolerable. The repeal would restore the practice of the early administrations, and, instead of establishing a life tenure, it would provide the utmost freedom of removal with the most rigid responsibility to the people for the exercise of the power. Mr. Herbert of Alabama asked whether the tenure of office act does not enable a hostile Senate practically to prohibit a president from removing officers. Mr. Lyman replied that he thought it did, but he stated amid applause that it was proposed soon to repeal the tenure of office act and that this was the stepping-stone to the repeal. A little wrangle arose upon a remark of Mr. Bayne of Pennsylvania that those who voted against the bill voted for the spoils system, and those who voted for it voted for good government. The altercation took a party tone, which was happily closed by Mr. Willis of Kentucky in saying: "The whole system is undemocratic and unrepblican both." The vote was then taken upon the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill, which was lost by 146 yeas to 99 nays.

So the bill to repeal the statutes limiting the term of certain officers was lost, after a unanimous report in its favor, and after a very short, and, so far as the opposition was concerned, a

wholly unimportant, debate. It was not asserted that the constitutional want of limitation had shown any necessity for the act of 1820 and subsequent acts of the same kind. It was not denied that the limitation was imposed for a political purpose under pretense of the public welfare, and that the professed objects of the limitation had not been accomplished, but on the contrary that it had produced an immense abuse. The only semblance of argument in opposition to the repeal was that the tenure of office law would enable the Senate to thwart the president, and that to repeal the four years' term is to create a life tenure. The conflict between the executive and the Senate, however, is inherent in the constitution which has associated them in the appointing power. The Senate can always practically thwart the president's power of removal by refusing to confirm the nomination of a successor to the incumbent of an office, thus throwing upon the president, unless the reason for removal be flagrant and notorious, the responsibility of leaving the office unfilled and the public service in that office undone. The tenure of office act was the formal assertion in law of a power which great constitutional authorities have strongly asserted, and the claim to which the Senate has never relinquished. It is a conflict which in the nature of things will be constantly renewed, but, whatever form it may take, it does not seriously affect the question of the repeal of the four-years laws. For if at the expiration of the four-years' term the president should renominate an honest and efficient officer and the Senate should refuse to confirm the nomination, it would justly incur the odium of preventing a fit appointment. If, on the other hand, the president, for partisan or other improper reasons, should seek to eject an honest and efficient officer from the public service

by nominating a successor, and the Senate should refuse to authorize the outrage, the odium of the attempted wrong would be properly thrown upon the president. This would be true whether the attempt were made at the expiration of a four-years' term or at any time when the president might deem a change desirable, and, as the repeal of the four-years' act would not affect the attitude of the Senate towards executive nominations, and would restrain the abuse of the executive power of nomination by making the president and not the law responsible for an attempted change, the objection founded upon the tenure of office act disappears.

The objection which is expressed in the cry of "life tenure" and "a privileged class" is one of the most ancient and familiar appeals of the spoils system to ignorance and prejudice. Whenever it has been proposed to recur to the constitutional principle and the early practice by treating the public clerk as the private clerk is treated, by ordaining that the public business shall be transacted upon business principles, and that filching politicians shall be forbidden to turn the public service to their private profit, we are told that a life tenure and a privileged class are odious and un-American, as if anything were so odious as a system tending to destroy the self-respect of public officers, or anything so really un-American as turning out an honest, efficient, and experienced agent because somebody else wants his place. There can, indeed, be no life tenure in an offensive sense so long as the power of removal is unchecked except by a sole consideration for justice and the public service; and the retention of a faithful, capable, and tried public servant confers no privilege which every such servant of every great corporation and of every great or small business house, and of every well-ordered department of human industry, does

not already enjoy. Of all the familiar tricks of the American demagogue none is more amusingly contemptible than the effort to show that a system which tends to promote a degrading loss of self-respect and a cringing dependence upon personal favor is peculiarly a manly and American system. It is a cry raised most vociferously by those who most despise and distrust the people, and, as the sure and steady progress of reform plainly shows, it no more deceives and alarms an intelligent public opinion than the ridiculous assertion that civil-service reform is a system which requires that a man shall pass a satisfactory examination in astronomy and the higher mathematics in order to be eligible to appointment as a night-watchman in the custom-house. In the familiar story the young lawyer was reminded by the judge that the court might be supposed to know some law. The American demagogue is incessantly taught by the experience of this country that the American people may be supposed to have some common sense.

While thus the efforts of the league under the first resolution, although not successful, have accomplished much in procuring a unanimous report in favor of the repeal of the four years' laws, the results in carrying out the objects contemplated by the second resolution are still more gratifying. The New York reform bill, which was passed on the 4th of May, 1883, was to take effect on the 4th of January, 1884, and in the meantime the public service of the State was to be classified and the working scheme prepared to carry out the law. This wholly new and peculiarly delicate and difficult task was accomplished to the entire satisfaction of the commission by the chief examiner, Silas W. Burt, one of the most sagacious and experienced friends of the reformed system. In Sep-

tember the classification of the state service, now made for the first time, was completed, and it was promptly approved by the governor. In the same month the mayor of New York, whose action under the provisions of the bill as they then existed was discretionary, declared himself in favor of the reformed system and invited consultations with the state commission, and the mayor of Brooklyn adopted rules for the enforcement of the reform in that city. In November the mayor of New York announced the rules that he had approved, and the character and ability of the examining boards that he appointed attested the intelligence and good faith with which he entered upon the work. The mayor of Buffalo introduced the reform system in that city, and early in December the rules and regulations adopted by the New York state commission were approved by the governor, whose fidelity and courage in promoting the reformed system are among his most conspicuous public services. In order to perfect the New York law, the state commission, upon consultation with the New York reform association, proposed to make the reform system obligatory and not discretionary in the larger cities of the state. The governor approved the proposition and recommended it in a message to the Legislature accompanying the report of the commission, and in May the amended bill became a law.

The result is that by the active coöperation of intelligent citizens of both parties who are neither dismayed nor in the least degree disturbed by any form of hostility whatever, the civil-service reform acts of the state of New York are now almost complete, and the reformed system is established by law with the consent and desire of the best citizens in the State in which the abuses of the spoils tyranny have been most

flagrant and degrading. All the admissions to the State Service are now determined by the competitive system with the exception of elected officers; of officers confirmed by the Senate; of laborers; and of 52 special cases excepted by the commission for wholly satisfactory reasons. But further than this, and in strict accordance with the recommendations of the resolution of a year ago, the reformed system is now also introduced by law in the 23 incorporated cities of the state. The mayor of each city is required to enforce it, and the police, fire, and law departments are not exempted from the operation of the law. Admissions to the city service are determined by competition, and soldiers and sailors of the civil war are given precedence over competitors of equal merit. The exceptions are elected officers; subordinates to superiors who are financially responsible for the subordinates; officers in charge of public moneys and accountable for them; and officers of elections. Rules and changes of rules adopted by the mayor are subject to the approval of the state commission. No recommendation or certificate except concerning character or residence can be received from any member of the Legislature, from any officer confirmed by the Senate, or from any judge. Political assessments or solicitation to give money for party objects, and promises of influence to secure appointments as partisan rewards, are forbidden, and every form of such venal coercion is defined and punished as bribery. This extension of the reform system to the state and municipal service of New York is a prodigious achievement. It has been accomplished primarily, of course, by an intelligent public opinion and by the patriotic agreement of leading men of both parties. But it is the reform associations, in which happily party politics are unknown, which have enlightened public opinion and

warned and guided legislative action. The expense of these associations is insignificant, and their intelligent activity comprehensive and untiring; and the results of that activity are extraordinary and of the highest public advantage. I doubt if there are any purely voluntary associations in the country which have produced so noiselessly and so effectively results at once so great and so beneficent to political morality and the public welfare as the modest associations which compose the national civil-service reform league.

How thorough and complete is the work done by these associations is well illustrated in the report of the committee of the New York association upon civil-service examinations which was requested by the state commission to inquire into the applicability of the reformed system to the police and fire departments of the city of New York. The report made in obedience to this request is a comprehensive statement of the general method of applying the principles of open competition to those branches of municipal service. Its clearness, simplicity, and good sense are conclusive; and, although the report is addressed to specific application of the reformed methods, it is in itself an admirable illustration of the practical spirit of reform. As I stated last year, Mayor Low of Brooklyn, whose effective conduct of municipal affairs upon the principles of this reform has given the city an enviable distinction, has recently held a prolonged conference with the state commission upon the general subject, and the state commission and the good cause have the great advantage of the experience of one of the ablest of municipal executive officers, whose faith increases with his works, and whose works would quicken with saving faith the mind of the most incredulous scoffer at reform. Meanwhile in

Massachusetts, where a committee of the state league was appointed last year to consider the application of the reformed system to the municipal service, a state bill was introduced in the Legislature early in the session, which was finally passed and approved on the 3d of June, and the commission which the governor has appointed is the earnest of a faithful and intelligent enforcement of the law. The act empowers the commissioners to prepare rules to govern the selection of officers and laborers both for the state and city service. This is a very comprehensive authority, and it devolves upon the Massachusetts commission the immediate consideration of a branch of the subject which has not yet been satisfactorily treated, namely, the application of the reformed system to the selection of laborers. This is an important and interesting question upon which the views of the commission will be eagerly awaited. But as the principle is easily applicable to messengers and orderlies in public buildings and to guards in prisons, it will be doubtless found not less applicable to laborers. For the essential point is not to find coal-heavers who can scan Virgil correctly, but coal-heavers who, being properly qualified for heaving coal, are their own masters and not the tools of politicians.

The first annual report of the United States civil-service commission was submitted to the president on the 7th of February, and on the 29th he transmitted it to Congress with a special message, in which he congratulated Congress and the country on the good results already achieved by the reform, and declared his conviction that it would henceforth prove to be of still more signal benefit to the public service. In November of last year the president forbade the choice among eligible candidates to be made for

political or religious reasons, and in concluding their report the commissioners state that in every stage of their work they have had the constant and unwavering support of the president. There is no reason to doubt that within the range of the 14,000 places to which the national law applies the reformed system, it has been honestly enforced both in its letter and its spirit. But it is not evident that the reformed spirit has generally prevailed beyond that range. Heads of departments and subordinate officers who are not sincerely friendly to reform will naturally perpetuate the old abuses whenever it is possible to perpetuate them, and there is little doubt that, in contravention of the purpose and the principle of reform, office-holders and the power of patronage in some of the states largely controlled the selection of delegates to the recent national conventions. For this abuse, however, no single individual can fairly be held responsible. The plain and honest declaration of the president five or six years ago that no public employé need feel obliged to pay a political assessment did not avail to prevent a general payment. The word of the president was not doubted, but the evil system was felt to be stronger than any officer, and there was then no law which protected the public employé from the plundering politicians. This has been now secured, and the enforcement of the law is guaranteed by public opinion. Should endeavors be made to evade the prohibition and to pick the pockets of the public servants, this league, and every association of which it is composed, stands ready to obey that opinion, and in both the national and the state service to hold the hand of the robber and to bring him to the judgment of the law and to the just scorn of the country. Public opinion is now thoroughly alive to the iniquity of robbing by political assessment, and

it is plainly determined that politicians shall not sell the public service to the highest bidder.

This abuse and kindred abuses which spring from the old system have been greatly ameliorated. But they will disappear wholly only when the national administration is thoroughly renewed and reinvigorated at every point by the spirit of reform at the head. Reform is accomplished not by those who acquiesce in it, but by those who believe in it. Congress passed the reform bill not because Congress desired the reform, but because the country demanded it. It is the young men who are represented in these associations, the young men in whose hearts and consciences lies the future of America, who supply the conviction and the energy which Congress does not dare to disregard, and who, succeeding in their turn to executive and legislative authority, will complete the work which has been so well begun. President Authur came to his great office with no prepossessions for reform in the civil service. But his honorable treatment of the new policy is one of his chief titles to public regard. Under the forms of law he could readily have baffled its operation and defeated its purpose. But his candor and good faith secured the fair trial of the new system within the prescribed limits, and the conspicuous and honorable fact that during his term and with his friendly coöperation the radical reform by law of the monstrous abuses of the American system of appointments and removals in the civil service began, will be the chief historic distinction of his tranquil and conservative administration.

Gentlemen, the immediate duty of the year before us is to urge to completion the repeal of the four-years laws, to secure the passage of other state reform bills, and to carry the reformed sys-

tem still further into the municipal service. Unprecedented progress has been made in all these directions, but, until this reform of administrative methods has become as much the irrevocable national and state policy as the personal freedom and equality before the law of every citizen, the work of this league and of the associations is not finished. Much has been done and much remains to do: and in congratulating you upon the extraordinary success in the accomplishment of the objects of the league during the last two years, I cannot forbear to mention one other service, but of another kind, that we have been able to render. It is an inestimable service in popular government, and it is the more conspicuous at this moment because we are now involved in the bitter controversy of a presidential election. It is the time in which party spirit rages uncontrolled, and in which, therefore, the fact which I mention is all the more impressive and significant, that the greatest and most beneficial reform in methods of administration which has ever been proposed in the country, a reform of abuses which were subjugating legitimate party action, destroying the moral authority of elections, demoralizing the public conscience, degrading official character, excluding able and upright men from public life, and disgracing the American name, has been begun and has been thus far effectively accomplished, not by party but by patriotism, by men in office and out of office, of different political convictions, strongly attached to different parties, anticipating political careers, yet coöperating with sincerity and enthusiasm, not as republicans, not as democrats, but solely as Americans; before all, proud of their country; above all, resolved that the national name should be unstained and national politics raised to controversies of principle and policy. In all the proceedings of

our associations and of this league, in all our appeals and arguments, there has been no word and no thought of party. Both Houses of Congress passed the national reform bill with practical party unanimity. A democratic Legislature in New York, a republican Legislature in Massachusetts, passed a state reform bill; a republican president, a democratic governor, have been the two most conspicuous and effective executive agents in enforcing the reform. If in the mad tumult of party passion, in the storm of hatred, falsehood, and malignant injustice which a presidential election whirls over the land, some appalled citizen should be ready to despair of his country and to be ashamed of his kind, let him take heart again and be prouder than ever that he is an American, and anticipate with surer confidence the greater glory of his country, as he reflects that civil-service reform, thus far, has been the triumph of patriotism in the midst of party conflict and despite the ferocity of party spirit.

At the conclusion of the address, the League adjourned to the parlors of the church, where the proceedings were as follows :

Mr. William Potts, the Secretary, having been called upon by the President, made a verbal report substantially as follows :

At the meeting of the general and executive committees held last evening, a short programme was arranged for the meeting of to-day, in which it was provided that the Secretary should give, after the conclusion of the President's address, a brief synopsis of the work of the League during the year. That address has been so general in its statement of the work that there seems to be very little left for the Secretary to say. It may perhaps be worth while, however, so that it may go on record in the report of this meeting, to state that during the year the League has occupied the same office with the New York Association, and has been engaged jointly with that association in disseminating information in regard to the general work of the League and in

acting upon legislative bodies, particularly upon Congress and upon the Legislature of the State of New York. A very large number of documents have been distributed from the office, including copies of Mr. Curtis' address and of the League report of last year, of Mr. Whitridge's pamphlet upon the Four Years Term, of the reports of the Federal Civil-Service Commission and the New York State Civil-Service Commission, and of the report made by the Civil Service Committee of the House of Representatives upon the purposes and operation of the federal law of last year. The latter report, especially, has been distributed in large numbers. It was drawn by Mr. Hoblitzell of Maryland; was concise in form and very effective; and it has been sent to all the active periodicals of the country, as well as to many thousand persons who have indicated their interest in this movement. This report of Mr. Hoblitzell and a small leaflet prepared by the New York Association, citing what had been accomplished in that State and encouraging other States to enter upon similar work, were sent to the various editors, accompanied by a request that the editors indicate to the Secretary their attitude towards the objects and work of the League. Replies have only recently begun to come in; but I may say that, of about one thousand replies received within a few days, between seven and eight hundred announce a sympathetic interest in the cause. A number of the writers have asked for information, and but very few—I think not far from a hundred—have expressed dissent from the attitude of this association.

The League sent a delegation to Washington to appear before the Senate Committee, as well as one to appear before the House Committee; and, as the President has stated in his address, the delegations were cordially received. The committees listened attentively to their appeals, asked many questions indicating an interest in the movement, and altogether produced the impression on the minds of the delegations that there is a much more vital and intelligent interest felt by those who are active in politics during this year than there was a year ago. Though our movement has been unsuccessful thus far in procuring the repeal of the four-year laws, I am encouraged by those who have been active *in* Congress as well as *on* Congress to believe that another year may see the work actually accomplished. I yesterday met Colonel Lyman, —the man who has been the special representative of Massachusetts in this movement, and was informed by him that there is great probability that the bill will be passed during the coming session. He stated that there was much interest felt by men of both parties in the cause, and very little actual opposition to it which was likely to prove effective.

I have from time to time solicited reports of their specific action from the various associations connected with the League, but I regret to say that the

reports received have been few in number and not so complete as desirable. I hope delegates present to-day will encourage their associations to keep the central office informed more fully of what is being done in their several localities, because it is possible for the League directly to aid the several associations, and for the various associations through the instrumentality of the League greatly to aid each other in the continuance of this work.

In the absence of the custodian of the funds, a synopsis of his statement was read by Mr. Potts; and an auditing committee, consisting of Messrs. Rice of Providence and Lambert of Newton, was appointed by the chair to examine it.

Abstract of the report of the custodian of the funds:

Receipts.

Balance July 28, 1883,		\$177.09
Amount Rec'd for Documents,	\$197.75	
" " " Contributions from 25		
Associations,	425.90	
Amount from C. S. Fairchild,	20.75	
" Contribution from " Independent		
Republican Committee of Correspondence" through Mr. Curtis (being balance on hand on closing Treasurer's acc't,)	53.39	697.79
		<hr/>

Disbursements.

		\$874.88
For Stenographer and other expenses of Annual Meeting 1883,	26.87	
For Printing and Stationery,	359.35	
" Expenses of Delegations to Washington, for hearings before Senate and House Committees on Four-Years Repeal Bill,	105.75	
For 500 Copies Report for 1884 U. S. Civil-Service Commission,	23.00	
For Rent of Committee Meeting Room,	5.00	519.97
		<hr/>
Balance on hand,		\$384.91

July 21, 1884.

IRA BURSLEY,

Custodian.

In response to the Chairman's request that the delegates make reports of the work done in their several districts, Mr. Everett P. Wheeler of New York addressed the meeting. He said :

I have been requested by the New York Association to make a statement of what has been done during the last year. The work has been largely stated by your President in his admirable address, but I presume it may be of interest to briefly review the methods by which the results have been reached. Some of the gentlemen present may remember that we said a year ago we had made a very vigorous canvass of our State with the object of forming local State associations, and most of those now existing were formed last year as the result of that canvass. There have been, however, one or two formed during the current year carrying out the same plan of operations. We have endeavored by extensive correspondence to keep up the interest of the local societies in the reform, and whatever has been done for the promotion of legislation has been attained with their co-operation and support. Delegates from different parts of the State, notably from Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse, were present at Albany when the reform bill was pending before the Legislature. We have sent delegates, too, from our own association to other associations to confer with them and speak at public meetings held under their auspices, and generally, by the means I have indicated, have endeavored to keep up their interest and activity.

In reference to the passage of the reform bill through the Legislature, I should state that we met at first with very considerable opposition. When the bill came up first in the assembly, it failed. A majority of those present were in its favor ; but, under the State constitution, it is necessary to have a majority of all the members elected in order to pass a bill, and there was not a sufficient number. That, of course, was a very great disappointment ; and we immediately set about to see if it could not be remedied. For that purpose, we had a meeting in the parlor of one of the hotels, where we invited about fifty prominent members of the assembly to confer with us personally in regard to the pending bill. We heard the protests of two or three as to the objectionable features of the bill, and their statements of what evils were to be remedied ; and they listened to our explanation. We invited discussion on every part, and listened to what they had to say,—the difficulties they proposed and the suggestions offered,—and at length did modify the bill in several particulars to meet the objections. I think I may say (and it is important to bear in mind) that a great deal of the difficulty in legislative bodies is encountered not from men bitterly opposed to the reform, but from those who are indifferent and have not studied the question, and who, when enlightened in regard to the

true character of what is proposed, are willing to vote for bills offered by our associations. We found it so. And the consequence of that conference was that, when the bill next came up, it passed by a large and decisive majority; and, let me add, it passed in opposition to a very vigorous endeavor on the part of some of our local politicians, and I feel bound to say that that opposition was not confined to one party. In short, we found uniformly from the beginning that the machine workers, the professional politicians, and the men who make a living out of politics were the men on both sides whose enmity and opposition we had to encounter at every step. I cannot say we had in New York any more embarrassment in dealing with one side than with the other. I think it will be found so in the other States; and, as one of the New York men was credited with saying, "There is no politics in politics now," I believe that is true of other localities than New York.

After having in this way impressed the members of the assembly (which is a much larger body than the Senate in our State) with our convictions, the bill went up, and there were hearings before the committees. We then found that securing a favorable committee report was not sufficient: it was necessary to reach the members; and we made a personal canvass of the Senate, which is composed of only thirty-two members. We knew in the first place some were in favor of the bill,—cordially in favor,—and some were irretrievably opposed to it. There were not many on the fence or indifferent, but some had not studied the subject and did not understand it. We urged all the arguments we could think of; and, by personal endeavor, we finally secured a favorable report to the Senate and ultimately a satisfactory vote. We were much embarrassed by an endeavor to exclude from the provisions of the law the police and fire departments; we were embarrassed, too, by an effort made to exclude soldiers and sailors from examination. We were content to give them the preference; but to exempt them entirely from an examination was to give an advantage to soldiers who had political friends and backers, and exclude from possible employment veterans with no political backers. This argument finally prevailed; and, while there is now a preference under the law, there is no more than that accorded to honorably discharged soldiers and sailors under the federal law.

In justice I ought to say that, in all the stages of the passage of the bill through the Legislature, we had the most cordial support from the Governor of the State of New York. Nothing more probably could have been done by any executive to support our endeavors. Since that act was passed, we have felt it was necessary to go to work with reference to the adoption of rules by the city governments. In the city of New York, Mayor Edson sent for some members of our association, and expressed a desire to co-operate with us, and

asked for assistance and suggestions in the preparation of the rules. An advisory committee, consisting of Mr. E. L. Godkin, E. Randolph Robinson, and myself, was appointed to aid him in their preparation and assist in their enforcement; and we hope to have these rules in a shape to submit to him next week.

Of course there are a great many questions in regard to the rules on which we are not very clear,—as to what restriction, for instance, can be placed on the employment of laborers. It is a well-known fact that in the several cities there has been a good deal of evil arising from the present method of appointing laborers by giving out of tickets to different political organizations, to be by them distributed to men who, for some reason or other, are entitled to their consideration. Of course, the result of that is expensive and bad service. Something should be done; and, though it would be absurd to subject day laborers to educational tests, we are trying to suggest some practical method, and we hope that the associations throughout the country will at least give a favorable consideration to the rules which will finally be adopted on this subject.

On the part of the Boston Association, Mr. Arthur Hobart reported in substance as follows:

The Massachusetts Associations are united in a League with an Executive Committee and officers similar to the National League, and finding before us the work of securing from the Legislature a reform measure, we thought best to act through the State League. The committee of the League chose a sub-committee composed of Moorfield Storey, Charles Theodore Russell, Leverett Sattonstall, Richard H. Dana, and Josiah Quincy, and upon the two younger of these, Messrs. Dana and Quincy, much of the labor fell. A bill having been carefully prepared and approved by the full committee was presented to a joint special committee of the Legislature appointed by Governor Robinson and called the Committee on Public Service, which gave three public hearings to those interested. The bill, being deemed too complex, was referred for revision to two active members of the Boston Association, Messrs. Uriel H. Crocker and Henry H. Sprague, who put it into more compact form, and the amended bill was subsequently passed by the Senate with but little modification and without much discussion. In the House it met with the almost united opposition of the Democratic members, and a considerable opposition from some of the strong Republican members—notably Mr. Beard, formerly Collector of the Port of Boston. A very radical substitute was offered by a Democratic member,—it was supposed for the purpose of killing off the whole movement. Both bills were referred to the Committee on Public Service, and another bill was constructed from the two, stronger and more comprehensive than that first

offered by the League, and without certain absurd features contained in the substitute. The bill reported in this form passed the House, receiving the support of nearly all the Republican members, including Mr. Beard, and being opposed by nearly all the Democratic members; and being then sent to the Senate, was passed by that body also. It will be found in the *Civil Service Record* for July. Its provisions apply to the state service and to the service of all the cities of the state, and it leaves to the discretion of the commission how far and how soon they shall apply it. The Governor has appointed as members of the commission, Robert R. Bishop, who was the Republican candidate for Governor in the year in which General Butler was elected, Mr. James M. Bugbee, who was Mayor's clerk during the administration of Henry L. Pierce, and Charles Theodore Russell, Jr., of Cambridge.

The participation in the work of the State League by the Boston Association has been its principal work. In addition, its energies have been largely enlisted in the conduct of the *Civil Service Record* in connection with the Cambridge Association. Of this six thousand copies are now distributed.

Not long since the Association received word from the Boston Custom-House, that secret violations of the Civil Service Act were taking place there, and a sub-committee was appointed to investigate the same. No report has yet been received, and I do not know that there has been any violation of the law.

Mr. Charles J. Bonaparte of Baltimore, at the invitation of the President, spoke, and said :

I do not know that I am able to add much to the experience of the meeting in regard to the course of proceedings in our State. Civil-service reform is a plant which has to be acclimated at the South. It really is an abnormal growth, and it takes the seed some little time to develop in the warm atmosphere of Baltimore. I have not perceived any indications of its having been heard of further South. I hope it may come in the course of time. Our association has done what it could. It attempted to have passed by the Maryland Legislature of last year a bill for the application of civil service reform principles to the municipal appointments in Baltimore; also, a bill to prohibit political assessments in the State; it having been decided, after a very careful investigation by the executive committee of the association, that it would be impracticable for the moment to introduce a bill on broad principles, applying the civil service reform methods to the State service. In fact, the State service does not, as at present organized, admit of classification. Those bills came very much nearer going through than I personally supposed they would. I had not the faintest idea that they could pass. The members of the Legislature were in a state of the most hopeless ignorance as to the first principles of civil service reform;

and, in fact, I think that probably not one man in a thousand in the State had ever heard of it except as a crank notion on the part of some enthusiastic persons in the Northern States,—somewhat like vegetarianism! [Laughter.]

Mr. WHEELER.—Or total abstinence?

Mr. BONAPARTE.—That was very much more practicable. Quite a number of the counties of the State, to the great disgust of the politicians, who find it very difficult to follow their course, have adopted local option laws. But civil service reform was looked upon as not being sufficiently formidable for politicians to fight; and I had no idea that these bills would even be accorded a respectful hearing, but they were. They made considerable progress and were defeated, not by a majority, but for want of a constitutional majority,—for precisely the same reason as indicated by the gentleman from New York. We came within one of the necessary constitutional majority in the Senate. I hope in two years from now, in the process of evangelization among the heathen, that we will be able to do something practical in legislation. I think the only thing we have in progress is to see if we can do anything with the city council to get them to introduce, by ordinance, the method of civil service reform.

There has been one experience which our association has had that may be of benefit to other associations. I do not know that they have had the same difficulty as the Maryland organization. Our association extends in theory to the entire State, and for several years all the work of the association had been done by the executive committee, which, for all practical purposes, was the association. The executive committee had virtually perpetuated itself from the first organization, for the simple reason that very few besides the members of the committee felt sufficient interest in the matter to attend the annual meeting at which the election took place; and we, consequently, had to re-elect ourselves from the fact that no one else was there to be elected. The number of members of the association is very respectable, I believe; and there is quite a number of persons who take a sufficient interest in the scheme to give it a benevolent approval and two dollars, but would not give up one evening of the year for the sake of attending the meeting at which the election takes place. Well, we found this practical difficulty,—that among the younger members of our association there was growing up a feeling of considerable insubordination,—at least, a strong disposition to think that the executive committee of the Civil-Service Reform Association was very much in the nature of a close corporation that perpetuated itself and consisted of worthy gentlemen rather advanced in years, and who did not, perhaps, care to have any new blood introduced into it; and they were also ignorant, to a large extent, of the work the executive committee had done. Finally, a meeting was held at which a committee was appointed to confer with us and express the desire those young

men felt of having something to do in connection with the work of the association. The delegation appointed to confer found there was no desire to exclude them: if they would come and take part in the work, it was all we wanted. But we had some little difficulty in determining how we could provide a channel for their activity, because patriotism (as far as I have been able to notice) has a tendency to take the form of talk; and, unless there is an opportunity given for patriotic gentlemen to express their views on the topics of the day in their own way to others equally patriotic, they are very apt to feel that things are not moving as they ought to move. We decided on organizing an advisory council which should attend to all matters that the executive committee should refer to them; and, in this advisory council, we put forty of the younger members of the association. We thoughtfully provided that only six should be required to make up a quorum, and that has proved a very useful provision indeed.

The advisory council having thus been organized, we have taken care to refer to them pretty much every question we could think of; and they have quite enough to do, and I am bound to say they have made useful and practical suggestions. And I think it has been the method of preserving the association from feeling of discontent, and also enabling it to get very good work done; for gentlemen who are not directly connected with the executive management in the association would have very little idea of the amount of labor and the demand on a person's time which the work of the association demanded. I had an experience of that from the fact that I had to draw—assisted by a committee of which I was chairman—the law which we finally determined to present to the Legislature for the introduction of our principles in Baltimore; and it was an undertaking of the most serious character. It required examination of the statutes,—which was perhaps useful in teaching me some law,—but it certainly imposed a very severe tax on my time, which I could not very well afford.

I do not know whether the same problem has arisen in other associations, or whether it has been met in anything like the same way; but it is certainly desirable that everybody who wants to do some work in connection with civil service reform, even if he does nothing but talk to somebody else about it, should have an opportunity; but, on the other hand, it would be difficult to give that opportunity without rendering our governing bodies cumbrous and difficult for action. This device of ours seems to have worked well in the little while it has operated; and, as we have not any intention of putting a patent upon it, if any other association desires to imitate it, we shall regard that as a most delicate form of flattery. [Laughter and applause.]

The following resolutions of the Maryland Association will be found of interest in connection with Mr. Bonaparte's remarks:

Resolved, That the Advisory Council be recommended to organize and carry out a thorough personal canvass throughout the city and among all classes of the community, and to report to the executive committee at its regular September meeting the names of all persons believed by the said council to be at once willing and worthy to become members of the association; that all printing and stationery necessary for the purpose of such canvass shall be provided by the secretary under the direction of the Advisory Council; and that the sum of two hundred dollars, or so much thereof as may be necessary, be appropriated for the expense of so doing.

Resolved, That the Advisory Council be recommended to prepare the draught of an Ordinance to introduce and apply the principles of this Association to the appointment of subordinate officers and employees of the City of Baltimore, and report the same to the Executive Committee at its regular September meeting.

Resolved, That the Advisory Council be recommended to enquire into the expediency, feasibility, and most suitable time and place of holding a public meeting of the Association to be addressed by prominent advocates of Civil-Service Reform both within and without the State of Maryland, and report thereon to the Executive Committee at its regular September meeting.

Resolved, That the Advisory Council be recommended to prepare suitable letters of enquiry to be addressed (in the discretion of the Executive Committee) to Candidates for the City Council at the October elections, and to submit the same to the Executive Committee for approval at its regular September meeting.

Mr. R. Francis Wood, of Philadelphia, said:

There has been no meeting of the Pennsylvania Legislature during the past winter. so that we were not able to attack it and introduce the bill defeated the previous year. We had a municipal election in Philadelphia last February, in which the Mayor and City Council were elected, and we tried

to induce the Mayor to adopt a system of appointment for the police department, the only department there which is so controlled; but he had made so many promises to "the boys" in the course of the canvass that he felt he could not do anything for us. The result may help us out yet, as the state of affairs is getting worse. Besides that, the only work done was to send delegations to Washington with several other associations to appear before the committees of Congress, and the distribution of documents, of which we have sent out, I suppose, something over twenty-five thousand in the course of the year. We hope to do better in the future. Next fall we shall have a chance to attack the Legislature.

Mr. W. C. Sanger, of Brooklyn.

I shall say, Mr. President, a very few words, which are all that is necessary to give a general idea of what is being done in Brooklyn.

The energy of the Association has been exerted in three directions,—to National, State, and Municipal affairs. In National affairs, we have, with other local associations and in connection with the League, had delegations before the committees of the House and Senate with reference to the repeal of the four-year laws; and, in State matters, we have worked in perfect harmony with the New York Association, and tried to do our share of the labor to which Mr. Wheeler has referred. In Municipal matters, we have been very fortunate in having a chief executive officer from the first in sympathy with the movement. Brooklyn was the first city under the law in New York to adopt rules and regulations for her service; and the influence of the Mayor has permeated all departments,—perhaps not his influence alone, but the spirit of the influence rife there. Most, if not all, of the examiners called in to co-operate with the Mayor have come from our association; and, in every instance, they have been men most heartily and thoroughly in sympathy with the work. The practical results of the law there have been of the greatest encouragement. I think not only the Brooklyn Association, but all the associations, may feel that there is good ground for congratulation. And so many persons who have heretofore opposed the law as absurd—principally because they knew nothing of it—have seen the workings in our city, and considered it satisfactorily brought to completion, that I think for this reason many men have not only joined our association, but become hearty believers in the movement. In addition to that work, we have also been engaged in distributing information to the public from time to time: and I think we can safely say that an interest and a thorough belief in the movement are growing steadily and rapidly in the city.

The Auditing Committee then reported that they had compared the financial statement with the vouchers and found it cor-

rect, and on motion of Mr. Cole the report was accepted and ordered on file.

Mr. William A. Aiken, of Norwich, Conn., then reported on behalf of the Association at that place :

I came here, Mr. President and gentlemen, to hear and learn rather than to speak. I cannot report much from our State. I do not know but there are representatives from other associations here from Connecticut. We have no league there that I know of; and I should probably know of it, if we had. I have been first frightened and then encouraged since I have been in this room. I was a good deal frightened when the President announced to us that he should like to hear a report concerning the activities of the associations, because what little report I had to give will relate mainly to inactivities. Perhaps it is not wholly our fault, for we are somewhat peculiarly situated; but the charming frankness of the gentleman from Maryland gave me a degree of encouragement as he related the experience of their people down there, so that I think possibly a word concerning our little local association may be of interest.

And first in regard to the birth of the association. Do you know, gentlemen, that Connecticut is a somewhat peculiar State? Each man has a sort of individual crank—so they say down there—to turn in his head, and it takes the people a little longer to get together and work in unison than in the neighboring State of Massachusetts. The difference is very extraordinary; and, when the question came up as to the existence of a Civil-Service Reform Association in Norwich, the two or three of us who had from the first been interested in the movement were at a loss to know just what to do. The birth of our association arose, in fact, out of an effort to get signers to a petition in favor of the civil service law in Congress. It was by selection from those signers and getting other names added thereto that the members were first gathered to our association.

Mr. Aiken then went on to describe somewhat in detail the manner in which his association was formed and its efforts to promote a public opinion in favor of civil service reform, and alluded to some of the difficulties which had prevented more active work, saying that the situation in Connecticut was quite different from that in the adjoining states of Massachusetts and New York, in that the State has not a large official force, and has not many considerable cities. He closed by stating the present purpose of the Association to be as follows:—

Now our attitude is this; we want to observe particularly the efforts of Massachusetts in carrying out her law; we want to see how it works, and we intend to do what we can at the proper time, and to introduce a proper law into our own Legislature; we want to bring to bear all the knowledge we can upon this matter in our State and in our city. But we have not yet seen the time when we thought we could work effectively, owing to the reason that we have so much less material to work on, and not that human nature is not the same in our cities, but we have less appointive offices there.

Mr. George V. Leverett, of the Fifth Congressional District of Massachusetts:—

I suppose I represent the most unique position among civil service reformers in Massachusetts. We have in our city an association formed from both political parties in the Fifth Congressional District of Massachusetts. Our origin was in the times of political excitement two years ago, during that campaign in which Massachusetts so emphatically pronounced in favor of reform. Well, growing as we did out of a political excitement, we hold a political power not in favor of either or any party, but intended to secure the nomination and election of a representative to Congress pronounced in favor of reform. We are also somewhat unique in believing in disseminating the principles of reform by means of dinners. We believe when "good digestion waits on appetite, and health on both," that there is no better means of disseminating the principles of civil-service reform than by having a good dinner and then a clear presentation of the topics of reform. I think at one of the dinners we had a large majority of all the members of our association present,—I should say as many as two-thirds of the entire body. We had one dinner in May, 1883, shortly before the passage of the Pendleton bill, at which we had as guests General Hawley of Connecticut, Theodore Lyman, and several of the distinguished men of Massachusetts; and, though all the sentiments spoken at that meeting did not receive the approval of the members of the association, certainly the wide discussion that followed and the wide report circulated through the press of what was said had a marked effect on the public feeling of Massachusetts. On the 8th of February of this year, we also had a very successful dinner, at which the President of the Senate of Massachusetts, the Speaker of the House, and several of the eminent members of the Legislature were present. The dinner was given for the purpose of promoting the passage of the State reform bill then pending before the Legislature. Mr. Charles Theodore Russell gave an interesting and effective presentation of that bill, and I have no question but that the meeting was really influential in accomplishing the good object for which it was intended. We also had our annual dinner in May, at which those

present were chiefly the members of the association. Like the Phi Beta Kappa, we count our age by our dinners, and I think that the plan has succeeded very well.

The Association at Geneva, N. Y., reported in writing that during the year it had purchased and circulated documents, had procured the insertion in the local papers of numerous articles bearing upon the subject of Civil-Service Reform, and previous to the election had addressed queries to the several candidates for the Legislature; and that the members were satisfied that, independently of these special efforts, the simple existence of a body of men organized in support of the cause had kept it from being overlooked and compelled the hostile to respect it.

The Association at Madison, Wis., reported that it had not been engaged in active work during the year. The members had assisted in electing to Congress a friend of reform who is one of the vice-presidents of the association, and hoped to be able to re-elect him.

The Cambridge, Mass., Association reported; calling attention to the value of the Civil-Service Record, published jointly by that Association and the Boston Association, as an official summary of the progress of the reform, giving accurate copies of bills and rules, reports of debates, and other information essential to all interested in the movement. The Association also reported the efforts made by it in connection with the proposed repeal of the Four-Years' Bills and with the passage of the Massachusetts Reform bill. It had offered and awarded during the year two prizes, one of \$100 and one of \$50, for essays upon the best methods of appointing executive officers and selecting laborers in municipal governments, and the terms and tenures most suitable to municipal offices.

The Brookline, Mass., Association reported a general activity in connection with the operations in Congress and the Massachusetts Legislature, and in holding meetings for discussion, and in the distribution of documents.

The New Haven, Conn., Association reported that it had recently been engaged mainly in the distribution of documents and in an attempt to secure the consolidation of the town and city governments of New Haven, and a consequent reduction of the number of elective officers. In the latter movement they had been hitherto unsuccessful, but they hoped to accomplish the end another winter.

The meeting at this point took up the matter of electing its president for the coming year. Upon motion of Mr. Wood, seconded by Mr. Wheeler, Mr. Curtis was unanimously re-elected. In acknowledging the action of the League, Mr. Curtis briefly remarked: "I need not say, gentlemen, how sincerely I thank you, and how warmly I congratulate you on the good work progressing so favorably in every direction."

Mr. E. P. Wheeler, of New York, then submitted the following resolutions:

RESOLUTIONS.

Resolved, That we congratulate the Civil-Service Reform Associations of the country on the progress that has been made during the current year: first, in awakening public attention to the importance and necessity of reform in the method of appointment to subordinate executive offices; second, in procuring the enactment, both in New York and Massachusetts, of carefully-prepared statutes limiting the exercise of absolute executive discretion in making appointments, and providing suitable and appropriate methods for selecting from among our citizens competent and trustworthy men to discharge the varied functions of American government.

Resolved, That we call upon all Civil-Service Reform Associations and friends of the cause to watch vigilantly over the manner in which the federal and state statutes on this subject are enforced, believing, as we do, that, if these laws are obeyed, the subordinate offices of the country will never again become the

spoils of a victorious party, but be held to be—what in truth they are—public trusts, to be administered for the public welfare, and not used to gratify partisan resentment or reward partisan zeal.

Resolved, That the merit system ought to be adopted in those states and cities to which its operation has not yet been extended, and we pledge the support of the National League to all endeavors to secure this result.

Resolved, That the National League will continue its efforts to secure the repeal of the acts fixing the term of many federal offices at four years, until those efforts shall be crowned with success.

Resolved, That in the actual extension of the merit system to the civil service of the cities of New York, Brooklyn, and Buffalo, we welcome the admirable beginning of a reform which shall yet become effective in every city in the country, and give to them economy instead of wastefulness, and efficiency instead of partisan and incompetent administration.

Resolved, That a copy of these resolutions be transmitted to each civil service reform association, with the request that they be brought to the attention of its members, and that these be urged to use all possible diligence to extend the operation of the merit system and to amend any defects that may at any time exist in its practical operation.

Resolved, That it is desirable to extend still further the circulation of the *Civil Service Record*, and that all civil-service reform associations be requested to cause copies of the *Record* to be sent to their members, to local newspapers, and to those interested in the cause.

Speaking in support of the resolutions, Mr. Wheeler said :

May I be allowed to take a few moments in stating the views that actuated us in regard to one of the resolutions in particular? Some of them are really the outgrowth of the year's work, and express in some detail (perhaps not too much) what we thought might be done for the current year. But

there is an apprehension, which has been often expressed to us, and we see it in the public prints, which it seemed to us it might be well, if possible, to overcome by a statement of what we conceived the actual facts of the situation to be. We have never thought, from the beginning, that our movement was at all a partisan movement. Now, we see great apprehension on this subject; and our answer is that the whole object and aim of the movement has been to secure the co-operation of men of both parties to crystallize the results of our work in such legislation that it should be binding, not only on the present, but all future administrations,—in other words, we aim to secure, not only individual support, but legislative indorsement. If we look at the history of the country, I think we shall be convinced that our course in this respect has been entirely sound; and that, indeed, it is the only one open to us. There was a time when an attempt was made to make this very issue we have now on hand a political issue. We are familiar with the history of Jackson's administration. We know the shameful, scandalous abuse of the Presidential power in that period. Senator Bayard has called our attention to some of the best speeches anywhere to be found in the collection of Webster's speeches, and in his eloquent oration at Dartmouth College pointed out the principal passages in those speeches by which, with wonderful force, Webster showed the evils of the abuse of patronage and called the attention of the country to what was the best method of removing them. The Whig platform, on which Harrison was elected, took distinct grounds in favor of the old and true American system, which is indeed the "merit system," to which we have given that name. And yet, after Harrison came into office, the evils which had existed under Jackson were continued. In other words, the system had taken such hold that no individual endeavors were sufficient to overcome them, for the reason that there was no legislation to support the President. A well-founded belief is that the pressure from office-holders was such upon Harrison that it killed him, so in one sense he may be considered the first martyr in the cause. We all know that every administration, since that time, whether Whig or Democratic, has been unable to resist the pressure. We were informed by Senator Bayard, and readers of Webster's speeches know, that when Webster was Secretary of State he made a vigorous effort to reform those evils; not in the direction we have taken, but he did make an effort, and the effort was partially, to a very limited degree, successful. And there was an endeavor to introduce a system of pass examinations; but this method outlived its usefulness. The evil of making public offices the spoils of political victory was so manifest that we undertook to establish the merit system. It is very clear to my mind, and it is the result of the observation and judgment of all of us, that, if you should make this question a political party question, that very fact would make the result we are aiming at—namely, to take the offices out of politics—impossible

because, if one party had that opportunity to reward its friends, the other party would adopt it.

As bearing on this point, the action of the Congress of Paris as to privateering may be cited, The representatives of the nations met and agreed to prohibit privateering. That was an illustration of the spoils system: the plundering and sacking of ships and cities are to warfare what the sacking of the offices is to political contests. They do not differ essentially: the same civilization that abolished the one will abolish the other. But, if one of those nations should get into war with a nation that did not admit the principle, the moment a privateer appeared on one side, whatever the declarations of the other side, there would be privateers sent out in retaliation. We have endeavored to make this thing impossible as far as the federal and state offices go, by the enactment of laws requiring that the offices included in the scope of civil-service reform shall be subject to competition only on the ground of merit. We may, therefore, as individuals, safely support in the pending Presidential contest the candidate who in our judgment will most effectively enforce the legislation which has enabled us to secure from partisan plunder some of those offices which were once the reward of partisan activity.

The resolutions were unanimously adopted.

Mr. Holls, of Westchester County, New York, then moved that the cordial and sincere thanks of the League be tendered to the President, Mr. Curtis, for his excellent, eloquent, and admirable address this morning, and asked the Secretary to put the question. The vote was passed unanimously.

On motion of Mr. William C. Sanger, of Brooklyn, it was voted that the address be referred to the Executive Committee, with instructions to print as many copies as may be needed.

Mr. Bonaparte then spoke as follows:

I was requested by the Secretary to prepare and present a resolution, which I have in my hand. It is rather an important thing, and I fear written rather hastily for the importance of the question. I will read it first, and then explain very briefly my reasons for putting it in this form.

Resolution read.

Mr. Bonaparte said:

The first question that I think would naturally occur is whether it is ad-

visible on the part of the association to pass resolutions of this description. On that, I have no hesitation in my mind, because I think that, as far as the application of the civil service reform laws to the national service is concerned, it is not only proper, but absolutely the duty of this League, acting as a national organization, to show that, to the extent of its power, it will see that those laws are not violated with impunity; and it is undoubtedly a fact of which we can properly take cognizance—so reported in the press—that attempts, more or less thinly disguised, are said to be making by different office-holders in politics, for evading, by more or less skilful devices, the operations of the law which has been passed for preventing the assessment of federal office-holders by other office-holders. I think that, if we are to satisfy the country that we are, in the good sense of the term, a practical body, we ought to let the country understand that, in the first place, we know these things, because everybody else knows them, if his eyes and ears are open; and, in the next place, we are determined to take some action in regard to them. The next question which I think would perhaps occur is the fact that in these resolutions we designate the gentlemen whom we expect to act as our committee,—first, in investigating the truth of the allegations; and, in the next place, in taking action in our behalf.

Now, my reasons for taking this action are simply these: I was very much impressed with the whole of the President's address to-day, but with no part so much as that in which he dwelt on the non partisan character of this association. This body is not, as I understand it, an association composed of men of neutrel political convictions, or who care nothing about politics; but it is composed of men of different political convictions, feeling an interest in the subject of politics, but seeing on the subject-matter with which this association has to deal that their political preferences have no proper scope of action. And it is very important indeed that we should do nothing which could lead any portion of the press of the country during a Presidential year to have a well founded ground for saying, however insincere they may be in saying it, that the League was acting and really intended to give one party a partisan advantage over the other. It accidentally happens that the great majority of federal office-holders belong to one political party, and probably the whole of this assessment will be levied, so far as it is a levy, against the law, for the benefit of one party and against the other; but it is not for that reason that we take this action. And I think it is proper to relieve the President of the League of the responsibility of appointing any committee to take part in the work of investigating the alleged truth of the violations of law, and of punishing the violators, if they exist; and also to relieve the members of the League from regarding their personal predilections by nominating these gentlemen. I was under the impression that the gentlemen named were the coun-

sel for the League: they are gentlemen connected with the prosecution of one noted offender under the law, which did more, I think, than anything else to convince practical politicians that we were also practical in our way. I think the passage of the resolution in the form I have presented it will be a warning to all persons that we are not going to be trifled with in this matter with impunity.

Mr. HOLLS.--I second that motion with great pleasure; but I would make one suggestion: I would suggest that the gentlemen should associate with themselves at least one of the prominent lawyers of the New York bar who is a Republican and supports the Republican candidate. I agree entirely with the gentleman that this League should speak out fearlessly on this point; and I think it will be sustained by the public opinion of both parties, all the more so because I recall, I think it proper to state, that at the Republican National Convention the National Committee, which has the control of the whole campaign, was directed to be composed of gentlemen eligible to Presidential electorship, thereby excluding all office-holders, and showing that the Republican party, as far as in them lay, at their convention wanted to obey the law sincerely. If any attempts are being made, directly or indirectly to assess clerks and evade the spirit of the law, this League is the proper organization to take cognizance of the violation. But I think it will gain strength if those steps are participated in by members of the bar, irrespective of their Presidential preferences; and I know such can be had who, while earnest in their advocacy of the Republican cause, still do not want it to succeed by violation of the law. I have no doubt that Republicans who are sincerely civil-service reformers can be found who will co-operate with the gentlemen.

Mr. BONAPARTE.—I should say then, "The counsel of the New York Association of this league, together with any other counsel whom they may associate with themselves."

The resolution thus amended was unanimously adopted, as follows:

Resolved, That Messrs. Everett P. Wheeler and Fred. W. Whitridge, the counsel for the New York Association of this League, together with any other counsel whom they may associate with themselves, be requested to examine into the truth of current rumors as to alleged violations of law by federal officers in acting as members of committees by whose authority contributions for political purposes are solicited from other federal officers and federal employees, with power, if they shall find such rumors well

founded, to take such action on behalf of the League as they may deem proper for the vindication of the law.

On motion of Mr. Cole of Baltimore, the thanks of the League were tendered to the Trustees of the Channing Memorial Church for the use of the building; and the meeting then adjourned.

Attest,

WILLIAM POTTS,

Secretary.

WILLIAM POTTS
 SECRETARY
 ON

PROCEEDINGS

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF

THE NATIONAL CIVIL-SERVICE REFORM LEAGUE,

HELD AT

NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND, AUGUST 5, 1885,

WITH THE ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

HON. GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED FOR THE

NATIONAL CIVIL-SERVICE REFORM LEAGUE,

1885.

PRESS OF
WILLIAM S. GOTTSBERGER
11 Murray St., New York.

ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE
NATIONAL CIVIL-SERVICE REFORM LEAGUE,
AUGUST 5, 1885.

Pursuant to call duly issued, the 5th Annual Meeting of the National Civil-Service Reform League was held at Newport, R. I., on Wednesday, August 5th, 1885, at 11.30 A. M. in the Channing Memorial Church, which, as heretofore, was kindly offered for the occasion by the Trustees of the Church.

Twenty associations were directly represented by delegates as follows :

Boston, Massachusetts : Arthur Hobart, George A. Goddard, Roger Wolcott, Richard H. Dana, Henry F. Jenks, John Ritchie, Chas. R. Codman, Ariel H. Crocker, C. C. Jackson, Geo. Wm. Bond, Harvey W. Shepard, Theodore Lyman.

Brooklyn, New York : John M. Comstock, William Potts, Wm. Cary Sanger, Edwin Packard, William G. Low.

Buffalo, New York : Henry A. Richmond, Frank W. Loomis, E. C. Sprague, Henry P. Emerson, Sherman S. Rogers.

Cambridge, Massachusetts : W. W. Vaughan, J. J. Myers, John C. Dodge, Morrill Wyman Jr., George G. Wright, Chas. Theo. Russell Jr.

Dedham, Massachusetts : Winslow Warren, Geo. Fred. Williams.

Fifth Congressional District, Massachusetts: George V. Leverett, John Fox, John F. Andrew, James Russell Reed.

Geneva, New York: F. O. Mason, Chas. D. Vail.

Ithaca, New York: Wm. Gardner Hale, Moses Coit Tyler.

Maryland: John C. Rose, Henry P. Goddard, Chas. J. Bonaparte.

Milton, Massachusetts: Edward L. Pierce, George R. R. Rivers.

Newburgh, New York: Clarence Gordon, Octavius Applegate.

New York, N. Y.: Everett P. Wheeler, Silas W. Burt, E. O. Graves, Jacob F. Miller, George Walton Green, Carl Schurz, Samuel Brearley Jr., A. Schoonmaker, DeWitt J. Seligman, George Wm. Curtis.

New Haven, Connecticut: Thomas R. Bacon.

Newport, Rhode Island: Edmund Tweedy, Lucius D. Davis, Chas. Wendt .

Newton, Mass.: John S. Farlow, F. F. Raymond 2d, James P. Tolman, John W. Carter.

Norwich, Connecticut: Edwin M. Williams, Wm. Appleton Aiken, Benj. W. Bacon.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: W. W. Montgomery, R. Francis Wood, Edward S. Sayres.

Providence, Rhode Island: Howard M. Rice.

St. Louis, Missouri: Henry Hitchcock.

Wollaston, Massachusetts: Josiah Quincy.

A general invitation having, as usual, been extended to such as desired to listen to the address of the president of the League, Mr. George William Curtis, a large audience gathered in the church.

Mr. Curtis's address is as follows:

CIVIL-SERVICE REFORM

—UNDER—

THE PRESENT NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION.

The year that ends to-day has seen an event of the utmost importance in the history of Civil-Service Reform in this country, a party change in the national executive. As reform can not be held to be securely established until it has safely passed this ordeal, our most interesting question to-day is that of its position and promise after five months of such change. This is a question which we consider here solely as Civil-Service Reformers, and I shall speak plainly, and I hope wholly without party prejudice, as I am sure that you will not suspect any party purpose.

Reform of the Civil Service is not as yet, and never has been, the distinctive policy of either of the great national parties. The relation of both these parties to reform is like that of the Whig and Democratic parties to slavery forty years ago. In both parties there was an anti-slavery conviction. There were conscience Whigs and free-soil Democrats. But neither of these groups could persuade its party to act unequivocally for freedom. The Democrats insisted that they stood by the compromises of the constitution. The Whigs declared, and truly, that their party was more anti-slavery than the Democratic party. But a Barmecide feast does not satisfy a robust appetite. It was not enough for earn-

est anti-slavery men that the Whig party was more anti-slavery than the Democratic party. Neither was an anti-slavery party, and after the long and vain endeavor to pour new wine into old bottles, the conscience Whigs and the free-soil Democrats threw the old bottle away and filled a new vessel with the divine spirit of liberty. In both the great parties now, there is a demand for Civil-Service Reform. In both parties that purpose is trying not merely to frame the profession — which is a very easy process — but to direct the action of the party. God speed the good work! As yet, however, I repeat, neither the Republican nor the Democratic party, as such, is distinctly and consistently a Civil-Service Reform party. A Republican *may* be of the strictest party orthodoxy, and yet despise and distrust reform. A Democrat may be of unquestionable party standing, and yet foam at the mouth at such a superhuman folly as that of not turning out every Republican in office when you have the power. The test of party principle is the allegiance of every member of the party. There was never an original Republican who was not opposed to the extension of slavery. There was never a Jacksonian Democrat who was not an enemy of the Bank. Civil-Service Reform is not and never has been an indisputable Republican principle like the restriction of slavery; nor an acknowledged Democratic policy like the overthrow of the Bank.

There is, undoubtedly, a much more general and decided reform sentiment among Republicans than among Democrats. But it is not yet strong enough to control the action of the party. The agitation was begun by a Republican Representative, but reform was abandoned by a Republican Congress. The movement was renewed by a Democratic Senator, but the Democratic

Party in his State refused to re-elect him. The bill introduced by him became a law in a Republican Congress, but by the vote both of Democrats and Republicans. National reform began under a Republican Administration, State and City Reform under a Democratic Administration. In certain details of the service the reformed system is enforced both by Republican and by Democratic authority. But had reform been the Republican policy, the Republican House of Representatives three years ago would not have laughed it to scorn. Had it been the Democratic policy, Democrats would not have overwhelmingly sustained every effort to destroy it. Not yet can either party truly assert that Civil-Service Reform is its peculiar and distinctive policy.

As the reform was not a distinctive party measure, the Presidential election of last year did not turn upon it. The Republican Convention, indeed, made a very satisfactory declaration upon the subject. The Democratic Convention gave it a passing nod. But during the campaign it was only by an occasional speaker here and there that the question was discussed. The most active politicians in both parties were hostile to reform, and each party, wherever it had the power, in contravention of the fundamental principle of reform, ruthlessly levied political assessments. The Civil-Service Reform League and the local associations of which it is composed took no part whatever in the controversy. The officers and members, as citizens of the United States, took individually the course which seemed to them best fitted to promote the reform and the general public welfare. Many earnest friends of reform warmly supported the Republican candidate, and many as warmly supported his opponent. Mr. Blaine was not known to have shown any especial interest in the subject. Mr. Cleveland,

as Governor of New York, had signed the Reform Bill. He had appointed a Commission whose personal character and disinterested devotion to reform showed his perfect good faith. He had strongly urged the extension of reform to cities, and promptly approved the legislation to secure it. He had cordially co-operated with the State Commission in every branch of its work, and in their second report, transmitted to the Legislature on the 28th of January, 1885, the Commissioners remark: "It is only justice to the retiring Governor to say that the successful establishment of Civil Service methods in the State of New York during his administration, and the acceptance of the reform by the public, are largely due to his intelligent interest in the subject, his fidelity to its principles, and his prompt and courageous action through all the stages of its progress."

The Democratic party, which nominated Mr. Cleveland for the Presidency, carefully avoided making reform an issue in any other sense than that of a universal change of the officers and employés of the government, and nowhere in the Democratic campaign was reform discussed or demanded in the sense in which the word is understood by the League. The President, therefore, was not committed to the prosecution of reform as the candidate of a party which seriously desired it or promised it. But his convictions and official action upon the subject were familiar to the country, and it was because of them that he was nominated. Undoubtedly Mr. Cleveland was nominated and elected, not because his party desired reform, but because of all prominent public men in the country he had the conviction and the courage of a Civil-Service Reformer. In the political situation of last year that consideration forced him as a candidate upon a reluctant

party, and if he had not been identified with reform he would not to-day be President. The vote which held the balance of power between the parties was the reform vote, and without that he could not have been elected. His probable conduct as President was to be inferred from the very considerations which had compelled his nomination ; from his official action as Governor of New York ; from his public declarations ; and from his character. To many friends of reform these were all full of encouragement. But many others, who did not doubt his conviction, or his courage, or his purpose, had the gravest apprehensions of his ability to withstand that party pressure for spoils which no President, Whig, Democrat, or Republican, has been able to resist ; and which in the light of experience and of the actual situation last year seemed to many Republicans to forbid implicit reliance upon the party as an agency of reform ; and still other friends of reform regarded his declarations as unmeaning political professions, and did not care to inquire into his official fidelity to the reform law.

A very large part of the reform vote, however, had been alienated for other reasons from the Republican candidate. But, except for Mr. Cleveland's satisfactory position upon the question of reform, that alienated vote would have selected and supported another candidate, and Mr. Cleveland's opponent would have been elected. The President may well feel, therefore, that he holds his commission from a power beyond and above his party ; the reform sentiment of the country. Although a party candidate, the circumstances of his election have invested him with an independence which no President since John Quincy Adams has known, but which the constitution undoubtedly contemplates as the rightful quality of every President. The constitutional Presi-

dent is the chief magistrate of the people, not the mere head of a party ; a head, as Poultney said, "moved like that of a snake by the tail." The circumstances of his election have given to President Cleveland what the spoils system absolutely denies to the mere head of a party, the ability to strike an effective blow for the constitutional independence of the chief executive.

What then is the condition of civil-service reform under the party change of administration ? Five months only have passed since the inauguration of the President, and the astonishing progress of the cause which the League is organized to promote is shown by the fact that public opinion upon the subject is already so sound, it sees so clearly that a total change in the employés of the civil service for party reasons would be as absurd and demoralizing and dangerous as a total change in the military and naval service for the same reasons, that at last a President is able as well as willing to resist the party pressure for spoils. While many changes have been made — and many changes ought to be made for the highest public reasons—, there has been no "clean sweep" of the public service. The reformed law within its limits has been executed with entire fidelity, and the country has seen with amazement and satisfaction the unprecedented spectacle of a Democratic head of Department enforcing the appointment of a Republican clerk against the intrigues of Democratic subordinate officers, and despite the remonstrance of the Democratic representative in Congress from the clerk's district. This, indeed, was but obedience to law, but it was the reform law, and a law which could be easily evaded. Beyond the requirements of that law, important administrative officers of the party opposed to the administration have been appointed and retained in positions com-

manding a large patronage. The interference of Senators and Representatives with executive action has been signally rebuked. Self-constituted counsellors, assuming to speak for the party, have been totally disregarded. Reasons for removals and suspensions, for which a party change of the executive has been hitherto ample explanation, have been frankly stated to the country. Useless places have been abolished. Satisfactory officers of the opposition party are serving out their terms. The chief criticism of the administration by the opposition is the assertion that its action in appointments and removals sometimes flagrantly violates sound principles of reform. The awakened intelligence of the country watches and judges every appointment and removal in the light of these principles; and, best and most promising of all, the spoils politicians of the administration party who hate to see the crushing yoke of a tyrannical system lifted from the neck of the independent American who asks to enter the public service upon American principles, by his own proved merit and not according to old aristocratic methods by the favor of a political "boss," declare their willingness to vote against any Democratic candidate who is tainted with the principle of reform. In the presence of facts like these no friend of reform need feel discouraged. They are wholly without precedent since the introduction of the spoils system, and they forecast unmistakably the triumph of reform.

But under this administration also there have been violations of sound principles, serious mistakes and inconsistencies, unwise appointments, and equally unwise removals. These, however, are not necessarily proofs of treachery or of hostility. During the late Republican administration and after the passage of the Reform Bill, there were constantly acts which were absolutely inconsistent

with its spirit and principles. But it would be folly for that reason to charge deliberate bad faith upon the Republican President, or to allege that reform was wholly disregarded under his administration. When, therefore, we are considering what has been gained for reform upon the whole, what progress has been made while as yet neither party is truly a reform party, the word "Higgins" is by no means a conclusive remark. The Higgins appointment, indeed, was a signal illustration of the abuse that we would correct. It was the appointment of a person publicly and responsibly accused of disreputable political practices, the explanation of which, if there be one, is not known, and an appointment made mainly at the request of a Senator, a request which is in itself a gross offence, and which experience and reason show to be made presumably for a personal and not for a public purpose, a practice which promotes the most flagrant corruption. This is the Higgins case, and I know no satisfactory explanation of it. It is the ordinary case under the spoils system, yet it is now made the occasion of especial and continuous remark. If, however, it fairly illustrated the general practice of the administration, it would not be singular. Certainly the severest censors would not assert that the Higgins appointment is of a kind unparalleled under other administrations; and to allege that it is peculiarly offensive under Democratic ascendancy is to concede, what is, of course, not intended, that more is to be expected from a Democratic than from a Republican executive. But the instance of Higgins, and the whole Higgins school of appointments, although absolutely inconsistent with the reformed system, do not prove recreancy to reform so much as the infinitely more significant and important instances of Pearson, Graves, Burt, and others, prove fidelity to reform,

Undoubtedly, if the Higgins case were a fair illustration of the course of the administration, it would show plainly that it was simply a spoils administration from which reform has nothing to hope. But test the executive by its course in the City of New York, and see if it indicates more or less regard for reform than any administration, Whig, Democratic, or Republican, since the spoils system began. In that city from the time of Jackson, the chief national offices have been held to be peculiarly the spoils of the successful party in the election. The incumbents have been generally local politicians, appointed primarily for party reasons and not because of any especial knowledge, training, or fitness. They have been the chosen political lieutenants of the national administration, charged with the interests of its party in the state. The late Republican collector, an estimable and honorable gentleman, was appointed to supersede an upright and efficient Republican predecessor in the middle of his term, in order that the administration might have an especial political friend in the office. His appointment was not only a political act, but it was a decisive incident in a party controversy, which rent the party asunder and stimulated the assassination of the President; and in the change of administration which followed and which brought another wing of the party into power, the collector, in obedience to the same theory, would undoubtedly have been replaced by another gentleman of the then dominant wing of the party, except for the circumstances of the death of the President and the natural and patriotic unwillingness of his successor to pursue under those circumstances a merely factional contest.

If President Cleveland had approved this practice, he would have acted accordingly. He is simple, firm, and direct in all his

methods. He has the full courage of his convictions, and if he had desired this tradition to be observed and the chief places in New York to be filled, not for efficient public service, but for the reward of the Democratic voters and for the maintenance of Democratic ascendancy in administration, he would have filled them all with skillful Democratic politicians. But apparently he considers such use of the authority committed to him as an abuse of a public trust. Attached by conviction to the Democratic party, and doubtless willing in every legitimate and honorable way to maintain its continued control of the national executive, he evidently does not think that such control is to be obtained at any cost, and does not hold the traditional practice of the last fifty years to be just or expedient or adapted to promote the public welfare. Undoubtedly he feels the truth of a remark of one of his immediate predecessors, "He serves his party best who serves his country most." But, however this may be, in strict accordance with his views often repeated, the President has disregarded the evil traditions. He has reappointed the admirable Republican Postmaster, thus retaining every meritorious subordinate in that vast office and lifting it out of politics. He has selected for collector, the term of the late collector having expired, a Democrat who is a business man unknown as a politician, and who says frankly that he has no time for politics and that he is pledged to conduct the Custom House upon purely business principles. He has restored to the naval office a Republican and a practical civil service reformer to whom the cause both in the State of New York and in the country is greatly indebted, and whom a Republican President declined to reappoint at the close of his term. He has promoted to the appraisership a deputy appraiser who has

been for many years in the service, who is confessedly a thorough expert and master of the business, a Democrat wholly unknown as a politician ; and to the surveyorship a Democrat who declares his sympathy with reform and who will be judged, as he would undoubtedly wish to be judged, by fidelity to his declaration.

The late naval officer and surveyor, it is said, were displaced in the middle of their terms and without cause, a proceeding inconsistent with sound principles of reform. If those officers were not only honest and efficient, but were also heartily enforcing the reformed system, discarding political favoritism, absolutely prohibiting political assessments, and so earnestly observing the reformed system according to the letter and the spirit that the administration could depend upon their prompt and hearty co-operation in all measures for improving the methods of Custom House administration, the objection is well founded, but not otherwise. An officer may be honest, but too strong a partisan or too closely wedded to traditional habits to be an effective agent in withstanding political influence and in reforming old methods. The reformed system leaves the power of removal unrestricted, and there are many just causes for removal which involve no question of moral character or the honest discharge of routine duty. When all criticism is made, the treatment of the New York offices is a signal proof of the sincerity and patriotism of the President, and a striking illustration of the immense and beneficial change which has been affected by an aroused public opinion. When this League was organized in this city in 1881, it would have seemed a mere extravagance to prophesy that within four years a President, nominated by a party which had been out of power for twenty-four years, would refuse, in the interest of the public wel-

fare, to regard the New York Custom House and Post Office as party spoils. And this he would have been unable to do, except for the consciousness that his own views of public duty were shared and sustained by the conviction and desire of so large a body of his fellow-citizens that, in carrying those views into effect, he might truly feel himself to be the willing instrument of the intelligence and the patriotism of the country.

Meanwhile, many changes are made in the service, and the administration is accused of removing efficient officers under the plea of offensive partisanship — a plea which is asserted to mean only that every Republican is in Democratic eyes an offensive partisan. That is undoubtedly true of the eyes of both parties in regard to opponents, and undoubtedly, also, any plea may be falsely alleged. But that fact does not destroy its force when truthfully urged. The tap root of the evils and abuses which reform would destroy is the partisan prostitution of the Civil Service. Offensive partisanship is a phrase which fitly describes it, and such partisanship is properly held to be a just cause of removal.

No man had a more sensible and practical view of this subject than Albert Gallatin, Secretary of the Treasury in Mr. Jefferson's administration. In the first months of that administration, after the first great party change in the executive, following a furious and exasperated political contest, Mr. Gallatin prepared a circular to the collectors of revenue, in which he said, with the hearty approval of Mr. Jefferson, that it was his desire that "the door of office be no longer shut against any man merely on account of his political opinions, but that, whether he shall differ or not from those avowed either by you or by myself, integrity and

capacity suitable to the station be the only qualifications that shall direct our choice. Permit me, since I have touched this topic, to add that, whilst freedom of opinion and freedom of suffrage at public elections are considered by the President as imprescriptable rights which, possessing as citizens, you cannot have lost by becoming public officers, he will regard any exercise of official influence to restrain or control the same right in others as injurious to that part of the public administration which is confided to your care, and practically destructive of the fundamental principles of a Republican Constitution." Forty years afterwards, in 1841, Daniel Webster, as Secretary of State, prepared the circular for President Harrison, which echoed the views of Jefferson and Gallatin. "I will remove no incumbent from office who has faithfully and honestly acquitted himself of the duties of his office, except in cases where such officer has been guilty of an active partizanship or, by secret means, the less manly and, therefore, the more objectionable, has given his official influence to the purposes of party, thereby bringing the patronage of the government in conflict with the freedom of elections. Numerous removals may become necessary under this rule."

President Cleveland, in the same strain, said clearly and forcibly in his letter of December 25th, 1884, to the Executive Committee of this League: "There is a class of Government positions which are not within the letter of the civil service statute, but which are so disconnected with the policy of an administration that the removal therefrom of the present incumbents, in my opinion, should not be made during the term for which they were appointed, solely on partisan grounds and for the purpose of putting in their places those who are in political accord with the appointing

power. But many now holding such positions have forfeited all just claims to retention, because they have used their places for party purposes in disregard of their duty to the people, and because, instead of being decent public servants, they have proved themselves offensive partisans and unscrupulous manipulators of local party management. The lessons of the past should be unlearned, and such officials, as well as their successors, should be taught that efficiency, fitness, and devotion to public duty, are the conditions of their continuance in public place, and that the quiet and unobtrusive exercise of individual political rights is the reasonable measure of their party service."

In declaring offensive partisanship to be a just cause for removal, the President confirms the views of Gallatin and Webster as approved by his predecessors Jefferson and Harrison, and in enforcing those views he acts upon the soundest principles of reform. That his declaration is insincere is not proved by single instances of injustice in a service embracing more than a hundred thousand places distributed across a continent, and that it is hypocritical pretence is neither consistent with his character nor with the fact that the great majority of place-holders are undisturbed. To remove a Republican officer for offensive partisanship is to give a moral pledge to the country that a Democratic successor would be removed for the same cause. It is an invitation to the severest public scrutiny of the conduct in this respect both of the officer and of the administration. Every community is interested to watch the event, to expose the offence, and to demand the removal of the offender, and no reason whatever has been shown to question the honesty of the President's declaration, nor the fidelity of his personal observance of it,

If, however, it should appear that such a clean sweep as is reported, and apparently correctly, to have taken place in the Claims Bureau of the Attorney General's office, has been actually made, it is evident that the same praise cannot be awarded to that officer. The Claims Bureau employs an assistant Attorney General and six assistant Attorneys. Their duty is the defence of suits brought against the United States in the Court of Claims. It is asserted without contradiction that these officers were swept out in one day, — Republicans, Democrats, and non-partisans alike, for they were of every political sympathy, — swept out without personal or official reasons alleged. Experienced officers were summarily replaced by inexperienced, and all was done, not for official reasons, but in deference to a demand of Senators and Representatives in Congress, and to make place for dependents selected by them.

If this uncontradicted report be true, there could be no more flagrant illustration of the shameful wrong of the spoils system than this submission of a branch of the executive department of the government to the dictation of members of the legislative department. The interference of Senators and Representatives with nominations and minor appointments in the civil service is not only without constitutional warrant, but it is an indecent and dangerous confusion of two functions which the constitution carefully keeps distinct. The Senator or Representative who makes himself an office broker, to pay his own parasites from the public purse, should stand well exposed in the pillory of public contempt, and by reason of such interference should forfeit the respect of the country and the confidence and support of his constituency. The law which already prohibits this dictation and interference in

all cases included in the classified service, should be amended and stringently prohibit them in all cases whatever. Such interference is the peculiar peril of the administration. And if the course pursued in the Claims Bureau should unhappily become the general policy, undoubtedly the whole force of the civil-service reform sentiment of the country would be strongly arrayed against the administration.

It will be remarked that the President's letter states that removals of satisfactory incumbents should not be made for partisan reasons "during the term for which they were appointed." But it is equally true that such officers should not be removed for such reasons at the end of their terms. The administration, indeed, may very properly regard it as expedient for reform itself to seize the opportunity offered by the four years law to equalize the important part of the service affected by the law between the parties, in order that each may have the same interest in the continued maintenance of the reformed system. This equalization, however, could be accomplished by means of such changes as ought to be made for legitimate reasons, without the removal of efficient incumbents who are not offensive partisans; and when once the equalization should be secured, the application of the reform to a much larger range of offices would virtually exclude the further mischief of serious partisan disturbance of the Civil Service. But to replace not only such incumbents as ought to be removed for just reasons, but also all satisfactory incumbents at the end of their terms by successors selected from another party, and selected for that reason, would result in a complete change in that part of the service during the administration, not for reasons of official conduct, which are the sole legitimate reasons, but for

political and party considerations. If the plea offered for such a course should be that this service is now filled almost exclusively with the adherents of one party, it is plain that the result would furnish the next administration with the same plea for the same change, and so indefinitely prolong the abuse.

Indeed, to facilitate the abuse was the very object in substituting a four years term for the constitutional tenure of honesty and efficiency. It was to place the whole Civil Service at the absolute disposal of the President, and enable him politically to change all incumbents without the odium of arbitrary removal. It is to make such a course difficult, and to impose upon the executive the rightful responsibility of direct removal, that we propose the repeal of the four years law. On previous occasions the League has considered the reasons of the repeal. At present it is enough to say that, should it be the policy of the administration, under the four years law, instead of reappointing satisfactory incumbents of places which, in the President's apt phrase, are disconnected with the policy of the administration, to displace them at the end of their terms for political reasons, the procedure would be the continuation of the old and mischievous practice from which the chief evil and perils of the spoils system spring. Such removal of competent and faithful and satisfactory officers has always resulted in summary and complete reprisals when the party control of the executive has again changed. The argument is unanswerable that, if political opinion and sympathy are just and adequate reasons for a change, and the power of making a change is unquestioned, the sooner justice is done the better. But the whole public service of an immense country involving vast interests of every kind can not be arbitrarily and radically disturbed at

every point without the utmost confusion and monstrous loss and peril. The change would become more and more the sole and absorbing question of the election. The election would become at last a civil convulsion. A peaceful issue would be always doubtful. With the rapidly increasing range of patronage and a highly organized army of party stipendiaries distributed about the country and supported by the public treasury, the question of the Civil Service would undoubtedly soon change from one of reform to one of revolution.

There is no reason to doubt that this is as plain to the President as it is to us; and unquestionably it demonstrates that the security of reform must be always dangerously threatened until the four years laws are repealed. This repeal must be urged more resolutely than ever, for it would be a formal restoration of the constitutional tenure and a declaration that removal should be made for legitimate official reasons only. Gratifying as the situation is, there must not be the least relaxation of our vigilance and activity in scrutinizing and criticising every instance of conduct inconsistent with the principles of the reformed system, and in defending the system against every attack. It is always a wise maxim for good citizens to remember, that nothing is done while anything yet remains to do. Undoubtedly we are soon to encounter the most resolute, shrewd, and deliberately organized assault upon the reformed system. The professional politicians in both parties whom the spoils despotism has produced are thoroughly aroused, and they will not relinquish it, and the power which it gives them, without a desperate struggle. The Soldiers and Sailors amendment of this year, very strongly supported in both parties, almost succeeded in practically nullifying the reform

law in the only two States where such a law exists, and this attempt undoubtedly will be renewed. Already the thunder of Democratic discontent with the reform spirit of the President is plainly muttering. Democratic Senators and Representatives in Congress, and the Democratic press, with signal exceptions, are unquestionably hostile to reform as we understand it. The constitutionality of the reform law is denied, and it is proposed to test it in the courts, and an effort in the Democratic House to repeal it is not improbable. On the other hand, the Pennsylvania Republicans demand a fixed term of office with removal for cause. Leading Republican organs approve the demand. But fixed terms for the larger number of important offices, upon which the minor places are dependent, already exist. The passage of the laws which fixed the terms was the second great triumph of the spoils system. The repeal of these laws is the present legislative object of the League. It has been recommended unanimously by the Committee in a Democratic House, and the demand of the Pennsylvania Convention, if made general, would array the Republican party against that object.

The assertion that without such a limitation there would be a life tenure in any offensive sense, or that the Civil-Service Reform League advocates a life tenure, is wholly unfounded. The Reform League leaves minor official terms and tenure where the Constitution and the contemporary Congressional interpretation of the Constitution left them. It holds that the power of removal should remain absolutely unchecked, and believes that the principle of the reformed system restrains as far as possible the merely arbitrary exercise of that power. To make sure that removals shall be made for legitimate cause only, we must provide, so far as law can

accomplish it, that all appointments shall be made only for legitimate cause; and so long as the power of removal remains free, and while it is committed to agents appointed by officers whom the people elect, a life tenure in any un-American or undesirable sense is impossible. The danger arising from the assumption of a vested right of office and the consequent negligence and arrogance of an official class is not to be apprehended from employés who may be removed at any moment, but it plainly lurks in abolishing the power of peremptory removal and conferring a right of office for a fixed period forfeited only for cause to be judicially established. The adoption of such a policy by either party, like the passage of the exemption amendments, would be a serious blow at reform and will be stoutly resisted by the League.

Such seems to me to be the present position of reform. I think no sincere friend of the cause in which we are interested believes that its promise is less hopeful than it was at our last meeting a year ago; or that it has retrograded during the five months of a new administration which expire to-day. I believe that any unprejudiced observer, Republican or Democrat, who considers the enormous difficulties and perplexities of the situation, and who looks solely at the interest of reform, will admit that, since the spoils system was first generally introduced into our national administration, no President has given such conclusive evidence both of his reform convictions and of his courage in enforcing his convictions as President Cleveland. Indeed, such an observer will not deny that the good cause is very much stronger than it was a year ago, and that the action of the executive, with whatever inconsistencies and mistakes, has been of the utmost service toward the final overthrow of the odious spoils system — a relic of

monarchical and aristocratic rule which degrades our politics, disgraces our national character, and which deprives American citizens in all parties of a free and equal chance honorably to secure a place in the public service. There is no higher patriotic achievement than this, and in the great controversy for administrative reform,—the most important contest in this country since that of slavery,—a President who has shown the fidelity to conviction, the official heroism, the confidence in the patriotism and intelligence of the people, displayed thus far by President Cleveland, unquestionably deserves the warmest support and the most generous consideration from all patriotic American citizens, whatever their party sympathies may be. As the great General,—his predecessor,—in the war for the Union, fought, not for a section nor for a party, but for all sections and for every party, for America and for human liberty, and therefore, as he dies, is lamented sincerely by a grateful and united nation; the President, in resisting the powerful and evil influence which would degrade the public service into party spoils, promotes the highest welfare of that government of the people which Washington in our fathers' day established, and Grant in ours magnanimously saved. He may be well assured that the President who emancipates the public service from the degradation of the spoils despotism will be gratefully remembered with that other President who broke the fetters of the slave.

Gentlemen, the stars in their courses fought against Sisera. But they fight for us. The desire of good government, of honest politics, of parties which shall be legitimate agencies of great policies; all the high instincts of good citizenship; all the lofty impulses of American patriotism; are the "sweet influences" that

favor reform. Every patriotic American has already seen their power,

“ And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended.”

Sir Philip Sidney wrote to his brother upon his travels, “ Whenever you hear of a good war, go to it.” That is the call which we have heard and obeyed. And a good war it has been, and is. Everywhere, indeed, there are signs of an alert and adroit hostility. They are the shots of outposts that foretell the battle. But everywhere, also, there are signs of the advance of the whole line, the inspiring harbingers of victory. Never was the prospect fairer. If the shadows still linger, the dawn is deepening.—the dawn that announces our sun of Austerlitz.

At the close of the address a resolution of thanks to the speaker, offered by the Hon. Carl Schurz, was unanimously adopted.

The delegates then withdrew to the parlors of the church, where the following proceedings took place :

Upon coming to order, Mr. Sherman S. Rogers of Buffalo moved that the Secretary be instructed to deposit one ballot for Mr. Curtis as president for the ensuing year. The motion was unanimously adopted, and Mr. Curtis, having been formally declared elected, responded—“ You have beggared me in thanks every year that I have appeared before you, gentlemen, and you will excuse any remarks on this occasion.”

In the absence of the treasurer, the secretary read the following report :

Treasurer's Report National Civil Service Reform League.

Receipts.

Balance on hand July 21, 1884,		\$ 354.91
Amount received for documents,	\$165.30	
" " " contributions from		
12 Associations,	195.20	
Amount received from Henry Holt		
& Co.,	245.40	
Amount rec'd from A. Hemmenway,	500.00	
Amount rec'd from A. Hemmenway,	500.00	1605.90
		<hr/>
		\$1960.81

Disbursements.

For Stenographer,	\$ 30.50	
" Printing,	288.84	
" Rent of Meeting Room,	10.00	
" Cost of Annual Report and Expres-		
sage on same,	76.28	
For Counsel,	626.72	
" Detective Service,	125.00	
" Telegrams,	11.39	
" Dinners, (Deficiency in receipts for		
acc't of public dinner at Ocean		
House, 1884),	7.00	1175.73
		<hr/>
Balance on hand this date,		\$ 785.08

The report was received, and Messrs. Comstock of Brooklyn, Andrew of Boston, and Montgomery of Philadelphia were appointed an auditing committee to examine the same. They subsequently reported that they had compared the account with the vouchers and found it to be correct.

The president then called upon the secretary for his report, and Mr. Potts spoke as follows :

"The secretary has no formal report to present, and as it is provided, I think, in the order of business that a call shall be made on representatives of the various associations later in the meeting to indicate the position of the work in their various localities, it is not necessary to go into that subject more fully than simply to say that there has been an effort to retain close connection between the various associations represented in the League and the League itself, and also to stimulate a desire on the part of those who have not as yet connected themselves with the League to do so. I regret to say that the contributions from the associations have not been sufficient to enable us to work as effectively as would otherwise have been possible, and that a considerable number of the associations which are organized, and in some measure active, throughout the country have not as yet connected themselves officially with the League. An effort has been made, and repeatedly made, to induce them to do so, but in some localities they have not realized the necessity of this. It is certainly very important that the connection should be so close between the different associations that each one may be strengthened by the vigor of the others, and, if this was realized more strongly by the various associations, I think that the whole cause would be greatly benefited.

"We have now about sixty organized associations, one or two of which have been recently formed. Several have been discontinued so far as activity is concerned, for the reason that in their especial localities the abuses in the service were not sufficiently marked to induce attendance at the meetings.

"The special work in the office of the League during the year began with the efforts made in response to the action taken here last year to limit, if not to prevent, the assessment of office-holders for political purposes.

"During the campaign last year, many thousand circulars were issued to officers and employés in the national service, and to officers and employés in the various State and municipal services; and, undoubtedly, a considerable effect was produced by those circulars, — certainly an effect in some instances which was unsatisfactory to the President and Secretary, in that, from certain very strongly partisan officers, the circulars elicited rather insulting responses.

This was not at all the general character of the responses received, and we had reason to feel that many officers and employés were strengthened in their position by feeling that the League was strongly engaged to support them in their desire to uphold this system.

“Following this action there was considerable effort made in continuance of work in support of the repeal of the four years’ bill, in the procurement of signatures to petitions, and in correspondence directly with Representatives and Senators in Congress. This, as you all know, was ineffective, so far as any result was directly accomplished; but, undoubtedly, interest in this particular feature of our movement was largely increased.

“The League acting directly and through the various associations has prosecuted efforts to obtain the passage of reform laws in various localities. During the year, a law was introduced in the Pennsylvania legislature which was not passed, it being found that it and what was called the Bullitt bill in reference to the government of the city of Philadelphia, in some measure interfered with each other, and it being deemed advisable on the part of members of our association there to avoid any conflict and throw the force of the association in favor of the passage of the Bullitt bill, which was so amended as to contain a very good provision in regard to the officers in the city of Philadelphia, the most important field.

“In the State of Indiana and in the State of Missouri, also in the State of Illinois, and perhaps in others, reform bills were introduced and urged; but in neither State did they pass.

“In the State of Wisconsin, a bill was passed to cover the appointment of officers in the city of Milwaukee; and, as I understand, regulations are now in force in that city. In the State of Maine, the legislature was induced, through the agency of the Portland Association, to pass a law touching the police department of the city of Portland, which law is now, as I understand, enforced, and meeting with such success as it was supposed it would.

“In the national service and in the States of New York and Massachusetts, where the system had been established prior to our meeting last year, the work has been prosecuted by the various commissions, as we have reason to believe, faithfully and with generally very satisfactory results.”

Mr. Sherman S. Rogers of Buffalo, having been called upon by the Chair, reported the association in that city in quite as vigorous a condition as at any previous time, and stated that of late there has been a concerted movement organized for the purpose of increasing its membership and adding to its efficiency. He regretted to be compelled to state that it was his feeling that "the Civil Service Reform movement in Buffalo had not received that assistance from the executive head of the City which was necessary in order to put the State law into efficient action. However, the association has been diligent in its efforts to bring the service practically within the law. We have had some controversy with the conservative gentlemen of the Common Council, as is perhaps known to most of the gentlemen here present who read what the public prints contain on the subject of the movement. We have had some controversy with these gentlemen on the question whether an appropriation should be made for the purpose of answering the demands of the State law in the selection of officials for the municipal service; and the common council, informally in a vote of the committee of the whole, not acting, however, on the question as a body but simply in committee, refused to make any appropriation for the purpose of meeting the expenses of the service. The order was brought into the Courts under the auspices of certain friends of the reform, and a motion was made before one of our distinguished and most experienced judges, Judge Daniels, to compel the Common Council to insert in their estimate for the coming year a sum which should be indicated, for the purpose I have mentioned. That motion was opposed, the counsel of the city appearing on behalf of the Common Council, and, after deliberation, Judge Daniels decided that it was the duty of the Common Council to make such appropriation, and directed an alternative mandamus to be issued against them. The Council took the matter into consideration at its next meeting, and, deferring to the authority of the Court, made an appropriation of \$250, to do what it was undoubtedly necessary to have at least \$1000 or \$1200 to do.

"It was thought best, on the part of those most interested in the matter, not to pursue the subject further, but to leave the question as it stood with the decision of the Court that it was the duty of the common council to make the appropriation, and let the matter go before the citizens for their consideration, so that they

might see that, notwithstanding the law had been expounded by the Court and laid down in the way I have indicated, the Common Council had clearly evaded or attempted to evade their duty in the premises."

Mr. Rogers added that there were various indications that the working people were beginning to take an interest in this reform in the city of Buffalo, and that this seemed to him one of the most hopeful signs of the times.

The president then called upon Mr. Charles J. Bonaparte of Baltimore, who gave an account of the establishment of "The Civil Service Reformer," now published under the auspices of the Maryland Association, and, after detailing the efforts of the association to compel a compliance with the Anti-Assessment provisions of the Civil Service Laws, went on to allude to the manner in which the association had been brought most prominently before the public, as follows :

"The League has heard so much of that, that I go over the field which I certainly should not attempt to occupy, but the case of Higgins was really a rather peculiar one. He is a gentleman singularly notorious in every way in Baltimore, politically,—even more notorious, I think, personally ; and his appointment, as the very first act connected with ourselves of a reform administration, created in a very small area and on a very small scale somewhat the sensation we would have had if Mr. Tweed had been appointed Secretary of the Treasury. There seems to be just about as much appropriateness for the purpose for which there is hardly any doubt it was made, to make Higgins' appointment as appointment clerk of the Treasury, as there would have been in appointing Tweed to take charge of the disbursement of money ; and, although it was rather difficult to say that civil service reformers, in contradistinction to decent people generally, had any special interest in it, still the sentiment of the community, generally, seemed to be that somehow or other we had something to do with putting this administration in ; and, if this was the first outcome of it, it would be desirable to know whether really that is what civil service reform meant. Of course I need not say that assumption rested on an entirely false premise ; but still it was necessary to deal with it as it existed, and therefore the association passed certain resolu-

tions, and sent a letter to the Secretary of the Treasury. The Secretary of the Treasury appointed Mr. Higgins, notwithstanding the resolutions and the letter. Why he did so I do not know, because he did not tell us. I could perhaps form an opinion, — in fact, I may say, I have formed an opinion, — but I do not know that I ought to express it. Since then, Mr. Higgins has remained happily in possession of his office, and we happy in the conviction that we did what was right. I think the results of this movement on our part were, at all events, very disagreeable to some of the other gentlemen who at that time were seeking office. One of them, who has not yet obtained the place he has sought with great persistence, remarked at that time, in language which I feel would be very unparliamentary, but is so exceedingly descriptive both of the conversation of Maryland politicians in general and on this occasion, that I will ask the League to pardon me if I quote his exact words, which were that, “since the stink about Higgins, we had got to be too damned particular down here.” I do not know, Mr. President, what friends of mine may have thought; but, if we have done anything even to originate it, I think the Higgins incident has borne a very good moral.

“I do not know that I have anything else to report. I read of another very undesirable appointment just before I came, of a gentlemen sent to civilize the Indians. They are said to be wards of the country, and this gentlemen would certainly be able to teach them the ways of ward politics. But I do not know whether that is not one of the false steps which the administration will correct. I hope it will correct it; and it will at least have the applause of the Maryland Association if it does.”

Mr. John C. Dodge reported for the Cambridge Association that no striking instance had occurred in that city like that in the city of Buffalo or the more striking one in Baltimore, but that there was no falling off of the interest in the reform in Cambridge. The labor of the association has been largely turned toward the support of the “Civil Service Record,” published in connection with the association in Boston.

Mr. William G. Low of Brooklyn reported in behalf of the Association in that city, saying in part: “We have sent our delegations to appear before the Judiciary Committee of the Senate of the United States in furtherance of the repeal of the four years

tenure act, and also to appear before the Senate and the Assembly of New York State in regard to the Soldier and Sailor Exemption Bills, and the allied bill in regard to the exemption of Firemen, and *all* the exemptions to follow behind the wedge the soldier's and sailor's exemption was to supply, and successfully. We have held ourselves ready to do duty again in that same direction, it necessary.

"We have made a move in regard to appointments in the Brooklyn Navy Yard; this department having been in times past the source of a great deal of corruption, by reason of the patronage.

"We have sent communications to the President, in regard to filling what might be called the Civil places by the Civil Service system. They have since been having examinations which are, as I understand it, rather in the nature of pass-examinations, claiming that the purely competitive system does not suit the Navy Department.

"Another point which may interest the League, and of which I wish to speak, is the controversy which has come to a very decided head in our city, in regard to what the soldier's and sailor's privileges are, under the New York law. But I am laboring under the difficulty of having been away from my city some little time, and have not yet heard whether the Judge of the Supreme Court, to whom the matter was referred, has rendered his opinion." (The Secretary here handed Mr. Low a paper, announcing that Judge Cullen of the Supreme Court had decided in favor of the position taken by the association.) The following is the announcement as given in the *New York World*:

"Judge Cullen, in the Special Term of the Supreme Court, yesterday rendered his decision denying the application for a mandamus to compel Fire Commissioner Poillon to promote William J. Chin and Patrick Travers to the position of foremen in the Fire Department. Chin and Travers are honorably discharged soldiers of the late war, and, with eleven others, passed an examination by the Civil-Service Examiners entitling them to the promotion sought. Nine foremen were wanted, and as Chin and Travers stood lowest on the list, receiving seventy-four each, the examiners certified the first nine for appointment, whereupon William J. Gaynor applied for a mandamus to compel the examiners to certify and the Fire commissioners to appoint the relators, on the ground that the law of 1884 provides that honorably discharged soldiers of the late war shall receive the preference

over civilians in the appointment to positions in the Civil Service, and the fact that Chin and Travers passed entitled them to that preference, regardless of the percentage they attained in the examination. On rendering his decision Judge Cullen says:

"Section 4, Chapter 410, Laws of 1884, provides that persons who served during the late war in the army or navy, and have been honorably discharged therefrom, shall be preferred for appointment to positions in the Civil Service of the State and cities over other persons of equal standing, as ascertained under that act and the act thereby amended, Chapter 354, Laws of 1883. By the last-named act it is provided that original appointments to positions in the Civil Service of the State, and of cities with a population over 50,000, shall be made by selection from applicants graded highest as the result of competitive examinations, and that promotions from lower grades to higher shall be made on the basis of merit and competition. The standing of applicants must therefore be determined by their respective merits and the results of the competitive examinations. It is equal competitive standing that the statute has in view. This seems to me so plain as to forbid elaboration. The contention of the relators, if conceded, would result that all appointments and promotions contemplated by the statute as the subject of competition should be filled by discharged soldiers and sailors, if there were such applicants who might be found qualified, and only in default of such applicants should such appointments be open for other persons to competition. However just or proper such a rule would be, plainly the Legislature has not enacted it.

"The construction of the statute here adopted does not render the preference given the discharged soldier or sailor illusory. It will still be substantial. Both the statute and the rules established under it contemplate the exercise of discretion by the appointing power among several of the applicants having the highest grading. The one with the highest standing may be passed by, and one with a lower standing appointed. But if a discharged soldier or sailor is presented for appointment, he must be appointed in preference to others having equal or lower standing. In other words, if his standing is equal or better than that of his competitors, he has the absolute right to the appointment, which is not the case with other persons.

"Application for mandamus denied."

Mr. John A. Andrew of Boston spoke for the Association in that city, and related the circumstances in connection with the attempt made at the last session of the Legislature, to exempt soldiers and sailors from examination under the law, an attempt which (as is already well known) proved unsuccessful. Mr. Richard H. Dana of Boston said, in this connection: "As the bill was framed there was no way of proving whether a man was a soldier or not. One of our greatest reforms was the reform of the Labor Department. They might pretend that a laborer seeking an appointment came from the army, no matter whether from Texas, or from Kansas, or from anywhere else; and as there was not absolutely any alphabetical list of all the privates in the United States army, it was impossible to prove whether such a man ever *was* in the army, because he would not be obliged, according to this Bill, to state what part of the country he had gone from. On the other hand, *we* should be obliged to prove that the man had not been a soldier.

"An amendment was offered that a simple regulation should be made, by which it would be necessary to state that the man *was* a soldier; and in what regiment, company, division, etc., he served. This was defeated by a large majority; thus showing the animus of those urging the Bill."

Mr. R. Francis Wood reported on the part of the Philadelphia Association in regard to the passage of the Bullitt Bill, and in regard to its provisions. Among other peculiarities he noted that, by the terms of the bill, the Mayor and heads of the departments were to make rules and regulations in regard to the appointment of subordinates, to take effect immediately; but that the heads of the departments named in the bill do not come into existence for two years, leaving it an open question how far the system could now be inaugurated.

On the part of the New York Association, Mr. Everett P. Wheeler reported at length regarding the successful efforts made to defeat the bill for the exemption of soldiers and sailors, commonly known as the "Earl Bill." He then alluded to the matter previously spoken of by Mr. Low; the effort on the part of certain

persons claiming to represent the honorably discharged soldiers and sailors, to have the law so constituted as to "give any man who served in the army and received an honorable discharge an absolute right to appointment, provided he can undergo an honorable and fair examination, and have himself placed on the eligible list." The effect of that would be to produce a military caste (for it is nothing more or less than that), a caste that has, by virtue of law, an absolute right to official stations. "For my own part (I am sure I speak the sentiments of us all), I do not believe it possible, when the American people come to understand that *this* is what is sought to be accomplished, that they will assent to it for a moment."

In conclusion Mr. Wheeler said :

"There is a third thing we consider extremely important; and I am glad to have this opportunity to bring it to your attention,—that is, regarding examinations. Of course, experience has shown us that, after all, when you come to the ultimate analysis, the examination is the crucial point. Examiners can admit or reject anybody by asking questions adapted to that end, and it is therefore of the utmost importance that the examinations should be adapted to ascertain the qualifications of candidates for the particular position sought; and it follows of necessity that, where positions are varied, as in municipal service, where we have persons exercising all varieties of mechanical trade, where we have positions for surgeons, nurses, and attendants, as well as clerks, it is essential, in fact, to make the system a success, that the questions should be adapted to test the qualifications of the candidates, and there should be special examinations therefore in reference to each particular place. Now, if I may be pardoned for giving an illustration, I will cite one in regard to the examination in New York for an inspector of provisions. We have in our asylums, hospitals, and prisons, inmates whom of course the city feeds, and for whom clothing and food of all sorts have to be provided during the year. Certainly, an inspector, who examines an article furnished under contract, and determines whether that article is according to the sample furnished, and is to be received or whether it is not to be received, occupies a most important position.

Well, it seemed to me that a good way of testing the efficiency of candidates would be by obtaining samples of the different articles such as are furnished to the city, and by having them marked so that the examiners should know what they were, and then subjecting those samples to their actual examination. The result was entirely satisfactory; and we succeeded in securing in the service of the city the most experienced men to be obtained,—persons who, from a political plane, would have had no chance whatever, and yet who are, as far as could be determined by any methods, entirely reliable and competent persons. It does seem to us worth while to give attention to all this practical work on the part of the examiners. I may say the examiners would be very glad to welcome any sensible and practical schemes or questions in regard to the different offices that were to be filled and qualifications of the candidates. It is not an easy task to draw successful schemes or questions. There are frequent examinations; and it is very undesirable that the questions should be the same, because it would soon come to pass that it was understood what they were, and the examinations would degenerate into a farce. And yet to provide new schemes for every examination would be very arduous, so that suggestions from practical men on these subjects we found to be exceedingly welcome, and would be welcomed everywhere by any fair examiner. These are the subjects to which the attention of most of our associations has been called, and I feel very much encouraged by the result of the work. We are quite aware that we have a conflict before us, that the very success we have had has aroused the animosity of every professional politician, and we must expect on their part an endeavor to repeal the legislation that has been accomplished, but still more to evade the provisions of the law; and, therefore, there is necessity for unceasing vigilance. We all know there is a class of professional politicians who stand by one another, who have offices they seek for, and for whom very often, if there are no offices, positions are created by a certain sort of free-masonry that has an existence among them. They are the men who, as enemies of this reform, stand distinctly prominent, but who did not oppose it in the first place, because they did not realize either its scope or the fact that in its adoption their vocation would be gone. To them, as Schiller says of the Muse,—you remember his very apt description,—

“To some, she is a goddess great;
 To some, the milch cow of the field,—
 Their only care to calculate
 How much butter she will yield.”

And that, sir, is our country to the professional politician.”

Mr. Henry Hitchcock of St. Louis reported the efforts that Association had made to awaken an adequate interest in the cause of Civil Service Reform in the State of Missouri, and detailed the progress so far made in furtherance of the passage through the Legislature of a Civil Service Reform measure.

He concluded by assuring the members of the League that the members of the Association are “quietly trying to do our part, and as time rolls on we shall be heard from further.”

More or less full written reports were received from Portland, Maine; Newton, Brookline, Dedham, and Melrose in Massachusetts; Providence, Rhode Island; New Haven and Norwich in Connecticut; Newburgh, Rochester, Ithaca, and Geneva in New York; Orange, New Jersey; Philadelphia and Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania; Chicago, Illinois; Lawrence, Kansas; and from Missouri.

The Committee on Resolutions, through its chairman, Mr. Henry Hitchcock, then reported the following

RESOLUTIONS.

Resolved, That, under a popular republican government like ours, employment in those positions in the civil service the duties of which are administrative and not political, ought to be open on equal terms to every citizen whose fitness shall have been ascertained by appropriate examinations and practical tests, and that the Chief Executive authority over the civil service, like that over the military and naval service, is an official trust to be exercised, not for the advantage of a party, but for the common welfare.

Resolved, That every American citizen is interested in securing for himself and his fellow-citizens the extension of the truly American and democratic principle of the equal right of every citizen to apply for and compete on equal terms for appointment to office, without the necessity of obtaining aid from personal friends or political leaders; and every local association is urged to bring this subject to the attention of all voters in its neighborhood by every means in its power.

Resolved, That by the general course of his executive action in regard to appointments and removals, and notwithstanding certain acts of the administration which, measured by the principles of reform, we disapprove, President Cleveland has proved, amid immense perplexities and difficulties, his fidelity to the patriotic principles asserted in his letter of the 25th of December, 1884, to the Executive Committee of this League, and his firmness and courage in enforcing his convictions.

Resolved, That the National Civil-Service Reform League re-affirms its resolution of August 1, 1883, in regard to the repeal of the laws known as the "Four Years' Laws," and urges every local association, and pledges itself, to unremitting efforts to secure a result so essential for a complete reform of the abuses of executive patronage.

Resolved, That the reformed system of appointments in the civil service established by the Act of January 16, 1883, should be extended to all the offices and employments under the government to which it is applicable, as fast and as far as is practicable with due regard to the conditions of efficient administration; and the National League urges upon every local association the necessity of promoting this extension of the reformed system by every fair and legitimate means, to the end of the complete removal of the lingering relic of monarchical and aristocratic abuse known as the "spoils system," which obstructs the daily discharge

of duty in every department of the government, degrades American politics, and disgraces the American name.

Resolved, That we regard the recognition by the administration of offensive partisanship, that is to say, the obtrusive partisan conduct of a public officer, as a just cause for removal from office, as being correct in principle, and in its effects as conducive to the establishment of a non-partisan service; and trust that President Cleveland will apply the same test with perfect impartiality to all public servants, whether belonging to one political party or another.

Resolved, That the friends of civil service reform have the utmost reason to congratulate themselves and the country upon the striking progress of the cause, as shown in the universal public attention which is now directed to the action of the administration in regard to appointments and removals, and in the high standard of sound principle upon the subject by which that action is judged. It plainly foretells the day when, upon the principles advocated by this League, every worthy American citizen in every political party will enjoy a free and equal opportunity honorably to secure a place in the public service.

On motion of the Hon. Carl Schurz, the resolutions were unanimously adopted.

Mr. Charles Theodore Russell Jr., one of the Massachusetts Civil Service Commissioners, then presented and read the following paper which had been prepared by Mr. James M. Bugbee of the same Commission, who is unfortunately absent from the country and therefore unable to be present at the meeting.

“The Commission charged with the administration of the law relating to appointments in the Civil Service of the commonwealth and the several cities of Massachusetts was organized about a year ago; but owing to delay in getting returns of the existing service, and in giving the preliminary legal notices, the rules prepared by the Commission, and approved by the Governor and Council, did not go into operation until the 30th of March last.

In the meantime, questions having been raised as to the constitutionality of the statute and the validity of certain of the rules, the lower branch of the state Legislature sought the opinion of the Supreme Judicial Court, which was promptly given, sustaining the law and the rules. This greatly strengthened the hands of the Commission in carrying on its work, especially in the cities, where the local authorities had been disposed to regard the law as an interference with their rights of self-government.

The provisions of the Massachusetts statute were copied mainly from the national law; but it contains one important provision which is wholly original, namely, that the rules prepared by the Commission shall apply to "the selection of persons to be employed as laborers or otherwise in the service of the commonwealth and of the several cities thereof."

The rules relating to the clerical service do not differ materially from those prepared for the national service. The rules relating to the prison, police, and fire service are similar, in certain respects, to the rules for the same kinds of service in the state and cities of New York. But the peculiarities of the service necessitate, in most cases, entirely different methods of application.

The clerical service, and the prison, police, and fire service constitute the first division of the Massachusetts civil service, and cover, under the present classification, about 2800 offices and positions. The work of the Commission, so far as this division of the service is concerned, can best be shown by a summary of the official records;

The whole number of persons examined is - - 791

The number passed above the minimum of 65 per cent. is 544

The number appointed under the Civil-Service rules is 94

The larger number of appointments were for the clerical service in connection with the State Census; but requisitions have been filled in all branches of the service,—and filled in a manner entirely satisfactory, apparently, to the appointing power. All this has been done within a short period of four months. The varying needs of the service have been met without any violation of the rules, or any appeal to the courts, or to the chief executive of the state.

The rules and regulations which apply to the labor service are, of course, wholly new; and it is of them, and of what has been accomplished under them, that this Association will probably be most interested to hear.

Under the provisions of the law authorizing the Commission to give a general or a limited application to its rules, those relating to the labor service were limited in the beginning to certain departments in the city of Boston in which a large number of common laborers are required during the greater portion of the year. The average number employed in these departments during the summer season is about 2500. This includes not only unskilled laborers, but men who know how to do special kinds of work, such as gardening, stone-cutting, paving, etc. A separate office was established for the registration of applicants for this branch of the service, which was designated as the second division.

For the information of applicants a circular was prepared, describing, in simple language, the system which had been adopted.

It was announced before registration began that, when a sufficient number of names had been entered to meet all probable demands on the part of heads of departments during a period of six months or more, registration would then cease. The wisdom of fixing such a limit was fully demonstrated by subsequent events. There were several thousand unemployed laborers in the city at the time, and to have taken all of them on the register for city work would have produced a very bad effect on the labor market. It required the exercise of considerable tact to prevent the large body of unemployed laborers from getting the idea, which some local politicians endeavored to disseminate, that their failure to obtain work was due to the new law.

By the simple device of issuing numbered tickets to those who first applied, and fixing the dates at which the holders of certain numbers could appear with their certificates of character and have their statements taken under oath, the requisite number was obtained without excitement, or disorder, or any charges of unfairness.

After taking as many names as were considered sufficient to meet the requirements of the service, notice was given that no more applications would be received unless (1) the applicant had served in the late war and received an honorable discharge; or (2) had been discharged from one of the departments after the rules went into effect, and could produce an official certificate of his capacity for labor and his habits as to industry and sobriety; or (3) had special knowledge for which the demand was greater than the supply.

As the certificates presented by applicants were not in all cases satisfactory, the Commissioners took the precaution, before entering any names on the official register, to make inquiries in regard to the residence and reputation of every person. This they were enabled to do very promptly and satisfactorily by having the name and residence of each applicant copied on a card and placed in the hands of the police, who, under instructions from headquarters, reported in writing on the card as to the character of the person named thereon. Of some 800 men whose names were taken during the first three weeks, only about 60 were reported as bad or as having given a false address. In all such cases a note was sent through the mail stating that, upon the evidence presented, the name could not be registered. In a few instances the men reported as having bad habits produced satisfactory evidence of good character, and were registered.

In some of the departments to which the rules relating to the labor service applied, a large number of extra men were put at work just before the rules went into effect, in order to avoid calling upon the Commissioners during the present season. In one department several hundred extra men were employed for a few days at the end of March, and then suspended. As the season advanced, and these men found they were not likely to get work in the department to which they were attached, and as they saw men getting work in other departments, under the Civil-Service rules, they became dissatisfied with their position and demanded either to be put to work or discharged. On the suggestion of the Commissioners most of these suspended men were given a discharge; and such of them as were certified to be of good character were, upon personal application, placed upon the register.

In filling requisitions for laborers, preference is given (1) to those who have had experience in the kind of work to be done; (2) to those who served in the army or navy in time of war and received an honorable discharge; and (3) to those having families depending upon them for support. By following out these preferences it has been found possible in all cases, so far, to select from the requisite number of names on the register without resorting to a draft by lot.

In responding to requisitions, the Commissioners furnish such information as they possess in regard to the character and capacity of each of the persons certified; and it is stated distinctly that the certification of double the number of men called for is for the

purpose of enabling the head of the department to exercise his discretion in the selection of those best fitted for the work; and that, if those selected are found incompetent or untrustworthy, they can be discharged — as the power of removal existing by law on the part of any officer or board is not impaired by anything contained in the Civil-Service rules. The names of those selected are required to be returned promptly to the Commissioners, on a blank furnished for the purpose. All discharges, for whatever cause, and all deaths or withdrawals, are also returned on a prescribed form, stating, in the case of discharges, the cause, the character of the service rendered, and the conduct of the person named. In this way a complete record is kept of all the persons employed as laborers in the several city departments; and the semi-monthly pay-rolls at the City Hall are examined from time to time to see that all the persons named thereon have been employed in accordance with the rules.

A description of the system makes it appear, perhaps, somewhat complicated. But in fact it is very simple. The heads of departments are greatly relieved; and the laborers who formerly spent days and weeks in hanging about the city yards and the corridors of the City Hall, soliciting the influence of the bosses and the councilmen, have their applications passed upon without delay, and in accordance with fixed rules which they can all understand. Those who are registered are told that it will not improve their chances of getting city work to bring any more certificates or references, or to bring any influences to bear upon the Commissioners or the heads of departments; that they are not sure of obtaining city work; and that, if unemployed, they should not stop trying to get work elsewhere.

This experiment of regulating the labor service has sustained a severe practical test during the past four months, and the results have been, on the whole, very satisfactory. There have been 38 requisitions made from the different departments for nearly all classes of laborers. Except in the case of expert gardeners and sewer-masons all the requisitions have been promptly filled; and from the names certified 228 men have been employed, some permanently and some temporarily.

By an ingenious arrangement of the names and numbers contained on the register, the persons entitled to be certified on any requisition can be designated almost instantly. Where a requisition is made for men qualified to do a certain kind of work,

and there are not enough names on the register to fill it, the officer making the requisition is notified of the fact and authorized to employ men for that particular work, first sending them to the Commissioners' office for registration. In all such cases the men are required to produce certificates of their special qualifications.

Complaints have been made, in some instances, by the men employed under the Civil Service rules, that they have been subjected to many petty annoyances from their fellow workmen who were in the service before the rules went into effect; and, further, that they have been treated in an arbitrary way by the foreman. If such complaints continue to be made, it is the purpose of the Commissioners to take the statements of the men and present them to the Mayor of Boston, who has given assurances of his hearty co-operation in the execution of the law.

It would be too much, perhaps, to say after so short a trial, that the question of applying Civil Service rules to the employment of laborers on the public works has been definitely settled. But it may be said with confidence, that the scheme adopted for the Boston Service has thus far approved itself in practice, and that it promises not only to improve the public service, but to benefit the laboring men by dealing impartially with them, and making them secure in the enjoyment of their earnings."

Mr. William A. Aiken of Norwich, Conn., and Mr. Wheeler of New York, both spoke warmly in regard to the value of this paper, and, upon motion of Mr. Aiken, it was voted that the paper be published in the report of proceedings, and also separately for distribution.

Upon motion of Mr. W. W. Vaughan of Cambridge, the Secretary of the League was requested to obtain the opinion given by the Massachusetts Supreme Court as to the constitutionality of the Civil-Service Law of that State, and to use his discretion in printing it with Mr. Bugbee's paper.

This opinion is here given :

The St. of 1884, c. 320, providing for the appointment of commissioners to make rules for the selection of persons to fill offices in the government of the Commonwealth and of the several cities thereof which are required to be filled by appoint-

ment, and for the selection of persons to be employed as laborers or otherwise in the service of the Commonwealth and of the several cities thereof, and to supervise the administration of such rules, is constitutional, and the Legislature may provide a penalty for the violation of such rules, and may give them a general or a limited application.

The following order was passed by the House of Representatives on February 10, 1885, and transmitted by the Speaker to the Justices of the Supreme Judicial Court, who on February 24th returned the answer which is subjoined.

Whereas, The Legislature of 1884 passed an act entitled: "An act to improve the civil service of the Commonwealth and the cities thereof;" and

Whereas, The commissioners appointed under said act have prepared certain rules, herewith submitted, which, having been approved by the Governor and Council and duly published, are by the terms of said act soon to go into operation; and

Whereas, This house has pending before it a bill appropriating six thousand five hundred dollars to defray the expenses of said commissioners in the supervision of the administration of the rules aforesaid, a substantial portion of which sum is to be expended by said commission in the administration of certain of said rules which have been given a limited application; and

Whereas, This House, before making any further appropriations for the purposes of the civil service commission appointed under said act, desires to be advised as to the constitutionality of certain provisions of said act and said rules; therefore it is

Ordered, That the opinion of the Justices of the Supreme Judicial Court be required upon the following important questions of law, viz:

First. Are the provisions of said act which authorize said commissioners to prepare rules for the selection of persons to fill certain offices named in section two of said act, which provide for a penalty for the violation of said rules when established and published as required by said act, and which provide that said rules may be given a general or a limited application, constitutional?

Second. Are the rules prepared by said commissioners, and approved by the Governor and Council, and published as required by said act, a legal exercise of power lawfully conferred?

Third. Are the rules which are made applicable to the city of Boston only, valid?

The undersigned Justices of the Supreme Judicial Court have considered the question proposed in the order of the Honorable House of Representatives of the tenth day of February instant, and respectfully submit the following opinion.

The Constitution in the fourth article of the first chapter of "The Frame of Government" confers upon the General Court full power and authority to make all manners of wholesome and reasonable laws, not repugnant to its provisions, to provide for the naming and settling all civil officers not provided for in the Constitution, and to set forth the duties, powers, and limits of such officers. In the exercise of this power the Legislature has the right to prescribe the qualifications of all officers and servants of the public not provided for in the Constitution.

From the nature of the case, the duty of determining and ascertaining the qualifications of such officers and servants cannot be performed directly by the Legislature, but must be delegated to some officers or agents. It has been the constant and necessary practice of the Legislature to confer the power of appointing such subordinate officers and servants upon some superior officers of the State, or upon the authorities of the cities or towns, leaving the question of the qualifications of the persons to be appointed entirely to the discretion of the appointing power.

The object of the statute before us is to provide for a board of commissioners, who shall make rules for the selection of persons to fill such offices in the government of the Commonwealth and of the several cities thereof, and supervise the administration of such rules. We think the Legislature has the constitutional right to provide for the appointment of such commissioners, and to delegate to them the power to make such rules, not inconsistent with existing laws, to guide and control their discretion and the discretion of the officers of the State or of the cities in whom the appointing power is vested. This is not a delegation of the power to enact laws; it is merely a delegation of administrative powers and duties; and there is no provision of the Constitution which prevents the Legislature from enacting that such rules, when duly made, shall be binding upon the officers and citizens to whom they apply, and that they may be enforced by suitable penalties, as provided in the last section of the statute.

The provision of the fourteenth section of the statute, that the rules "may be given a general or a limited application," is not open to any constitutional objection.

The power of the Legislature to make or to authorize local laws for the administration of local affairs is beyond question. It has the right to make local laws to meet the peculiar exigencies of any part of the community. The qualifications required to fill an office in one place may be different from those required for a similar office in other places, and different rules of examination may be required. We have no doubt that the Legislature, or the commissioners acting under its authority, can make valid rules for the city of Boston differing from those which are found to be reasonable and wise in other localities.

We do not suppose it was the intention of the House to require us to examine every one of the numerous rules made by the commissioners and to give an opinion upon the validity of each. The preamble of the order states that the House desires to be advised as to the constitutionality of certain provisions of said act and said rules. We interpreted the second and third questions, therefore, as designed to ask whether it is a legal exercise of power lawfully conferred, for the commissioners to make rules consistent with existing laws, and whether they can make laws applicable only to the city of Boston. With this understanding of their scope, we answer each of the three questions in the affirmative.

Mr. Justice Colburn has been prevented by illness from considering the questions proposed, and therefore does not join with us in the opinion.

MARCUS MORTON,
WALBRIDGE A. FIELD,
CHARLES DEVENS,
WILLIAM ALLEN,
CHARLES ALLEN,
OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, JR.

February 24, 1885.

On motion of Mr. George V. Leverett of Cambridge, Massachusetts, the Milton (Mass.) Civil-Service Reform Association was admitted to membership in the National League.

Mr. Everett P. Wheeler, of counsel for the League, made the following report :

"It may be remembered that, at the last meeting of the League, Mr. Whitridge and myself were instructed in reference to prosecuting offenders against the provisions of the federal Act prohibiting the levying of political assessments. We associated with us Mr. Halsey of the Connecticut bar, who rendered us some very important assistance in that connection, and whose advice in regard to the true construction of the statute we found exceedingly valuable. The cases brought to our attention were various and in different parts of the country. There was one at Perth Amboy in New Jersey, in regard to the collector, Mr. Edgar; one in regard to the case of the Postmaster at Oakland, Cal.,—the most flagrant of all,—the particulars of which were given in the RECORD; there was one also at Grand Rapids, Mich.; and then there was a variety of information brought to our attention in regard to proceedings of John C. New, in reference to his position in the Department of the Interior, and the calls made on clerks in that department for contributions to aid in carrying the election in Indiana. We retained counsel in different parts of the country to aid in the prosecution of these offenders, and we thought that we clearly established our case against the collector at Perth Amboy, against the postmaster at Oakland, and against the postmaster at Grand Rapids; but in the latter case we failed to convince the United States Commissioner, and, in the two other cases, the United States grand juries, that the offense was one that furnished a foundation for actual indictment and arrest. The difficulty seemed to be that the offense was so common that it hardly merited the stigma of an indictment. The California case excited a great deal of comment in the papers of that State; some of the Republican press thought it very scandalous that any attempt of this sort should be made, and that it was really a partisan movement against an innocent and unoffending official endeavoring to perform his duty by promoting the success of his party at election. But I think this may be said, that, if there were a stronger public sentiment on this subject in the different localities in which these prosecutions were instituted, there would have been no question of the successful indictment and conviction of the offenders. That is the difficulty we found there. We had very little sympathy from those whose support and assistance were necessary to success. At the same time, the fact that we were instituting these prosecutions, and the League had pledged itself to give aid and assistance to any persons bringing cases of

this sort to its notice, had, undoubtedly, in co-operation with the circulars referred to, a very powerful preventive effect. We had it from the very best authorities, from persons inside politics, and who were willing, after the stress of the canvas was over, to impart the information, that the amount of assessments collected from federal clerks and office-holders during the last campaign was not more than one quarter of that collected during the campaign of 1880; and we think, while we have not succeeded in convicting offenders, we did succeed in accomplishing the more desirable result of preventing crime.

"The only other circumstance is that, since the incoming of the administration, attention has been called to the Perth Amboy case, the collector's term has expired, and he has been dropped. We have not learned in regard to the postmasters at Grand Rapids and Oakland; but I do think it is no more than justice to the Postmaster-General to say that he took the position, in regard to the cases presented to him by ourselves, that it was his duty to make a careful investigation himself,—that he did not feel that the mere fact of a complaint warranted a removal on the ground of offensive partisanship or otherwise, but he took up the matters fairly, in order to reach a correct conclusion. And we are not informed that that conclusion has been reached."

Mr. Richard H. Dana, speaking of the proposed repeal of the four years bills, urged that there should be a provision of law for a probationary term for those receiving appointments to positions now affected by those laws. His suggestion was that, upon the repeal of the four years limit, the officers thereafter appointed, to whom that limit would have applied, should be required to serve a probationary term of six, nine, or twelve months before receiving a permanent appointment, and that, at the end of the term of probation, the appointing power might make the appointment permanent, that is, during competency and good behavior, or drop the individual concerned from the service, by withholding a permanent appointment. "I wonder," said he, "if, under such conditions, Mr. Higgins or Mr. Pillsbury would have received a permanent appointment."

Mr. Dana moved "that a committee of five be appointed

by the Chair, to consider the advisability of providing a probationary term before final appointment, in case of offices to be affected by the proposed repeal of the four years laws; said probationary term not to be longer than one year."

The resolution having been amended by referring the matter to the Executive Committee instead of to a special committee, was adopted.

Mr. John C. Rose of Baltimore and Mr. W. G. Low spoke of the desirability of printing the paper of Mr. Bugbee (heretofore given) in the German language, as well as in English, for distribution. On motion the matter was referred to the officers of the League, with power.

Mr. W. W. Montgomery of Philadelphia spoke of the desirability of the adoption of some method by which the positions now covered by the four years bill may be hereafter filled by competitive examinations, or promotion, under some extension of the present rules.

Mr. Montgomery moved that a properly certified copy of the resolutions heretofore given be sent to the President of the United States. The motion was adopted.

Upon motion of Colonel Charles R. Codman of Boston, the thanks of the League were tendered to the Trustees of the Channing Memorial Church for their courtesy in giving the use of the church and church parlors for its meetings.

The motion was unanimously adopted, and the meeting then adjourned.

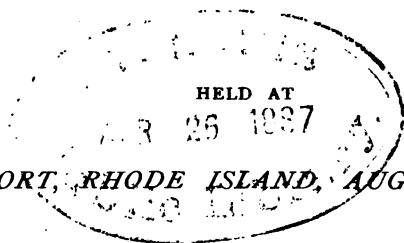
Attest,

WILLIAM POTTS.

PROCEEDINGS

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF

THE NATIONAL CIVIL-SERVICE REFORM LEAGUE



NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND, AUGUST 4, 1886,

WITH THE ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

HON. GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED FOR THE
NATIONAL CIVIL-SERVICE REFORM LEAGUE,
1886.

PRESS OF
WILLIAM S. GOTTSBERGER
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ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE
NATIONAL CIVIL-SERVICE REFORM LEAGUE.

AUGUST 4, 1886.

Pursuant to call duly issued, the 6th Annual Meeting of the National Civil-Service Reform League was held at Newport, R. I., on the 4th of August, 1886, in the Channing Memorial Church, which had been kindly offered for the use of the League as in former years.

Seventeen associations were represented directly by delegates and members, as follows:

Baltimore, Maryland: Chas. J. Bonaparte, Edwin Brevitt Coale.

Boston, Massachusetts: Chas. R. Codman, John Ritchie, William Simes, Francis A. Osborn, H. W. Chaplin, Dana Estes, Jacob L. Williams, Richard H. Dana, Arthur Hobart, James J. Myers, Robert P. Clapp.

Brookline, Massachusetts: Theodore Lyman, Dana Estes,
Brooklyn, New York: William G. Low, William Potts,
Edward S. Philbrick.

Cambridge, Massachusetts: W. W. Vaughan, Morrill Wyman, Jr., Chas. Theodore Russell, Jr.

Dedham, Massachusetts: Winslow Warren.

Fifth Congressional District, Massachusetts: George G. Wright.

Geneva, New York: P. Richards, A. L. Chew, Arthur P. Rose.

Indiana State Association: Wm. Dudley Foulke, Arthur M. Reeves.

Malden, Massachusetts: Wm. B. de las Casas.

Milton, Massachusetts: Edward L. Pierce.

Missouri State Association: Chas. Claflin Allen.

Newport, Rhode Island: Lucius D. Davis, Edmund Tweedy, John W. Day, Forrest F. Emerson.

Newton, Massachusetts: James P. Tolman, Henry Lambert, John S. Farlow.

New York: Everett P. Wheeler, George William Curtis, Carl Schurz, F. W. Whitridge, Frederick Wm. Holls, Thomas Sturgis, John M. Comstock, Silas W. Burt, John Jay, Samuel Brearley, Jr., William Potts.

Norwich, Connecticut: Wm. Appleton Aiken.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Joseph Parrish, Thomas Leaming, Robert Adams, Jr., Herbert Welsh, R. Francis Wood, J. G. Rosengarten, Lincoln L. Eyre.

A general invitation having been extended through the press as usual, at 11 A. M., a good company was assembled to listen to the address of Mr. George William Curtis, the president of the League, which was as follows:

THE SITUATION.

THE earliest historic legend of the State in which we are assembled is that of the Indian greeting to Roger Williams. As he coasted along the western shore of the Seekonk river at the head of the bay, he heard suddenly a greeting in his native tongue. "What cheer? Netop, what cheer?" It was the voice of friendly Indians welcoming him to the State that he founded, and which, remembering his courage and his faith, has wisely chosen for its emblem the anchor, and for its legend, the words, "in God we hope." If now mindful of the cause which brings us to the shores of Narragansett bay, we should ask each other of Civil-Service Reform, what cheer brothers, what cheer? I, for one, should answer promptly, better and better cheer; such cheer, indeed, as no association like ours ever enjoyed at its sixth annual meeting; never were the skies so bright, never was the future so fair.

I am fully aware of the other view which is vociferously urged. I read every day in some newspaper that Civil-Service Reform is now at last finally dead. But I have heard it so often and have been so constantly bidden to the obsequies, that I am very skeptical of its actual decease. It is now twenty years since that worthy son of Rhode Island, Thomas Allen Jenckes, opened

in Congress the great debate for reform, and at least half a dozen times since that happy day I have heard that reform was as dead as the alien and sedition laws of the United States bank. When Congress refused the appropriation to President Grant I was sympathetically assured that the pretty bubble had burst. When President Hayes felt that his views were those of a small minority, but an exceedingly awkward squad for the party managers, and his action accordingly was very cautious, it was announced again that the humbug was exploded. When the House of Representatives in 1882 for half an hour merrily kicked and cuffed reform and cut down the appropriation which President Arthur had asked, it was evident to many delighted observers that Sunday-school politics were "played out." When a large body of Civil Service Reformers supported Mr. Cleveland for the presidency, it was angrily alleged that reform was betrayed and murdered in the house of its false friends. When inexplicable appointments, and arbitrary removals, and an apparent want of consistent adherence to principle have been pointed out under the present administration, the situation has been described as a wild saturnalia of spoils around the corpse of reform. Indeed one thing of which in many willing minds there has been no doubt ever since the reform was born, is that reform is dead. If it were so, it would certainly prove that death loves a shining mark, and he is supposed to be a sure marksman. But this time he has missed.

Public opinion upon this subject was never so aroused, so enlightened, and so determined. The wholesome purpose and sound reason of reform were never so generally and so clearly perceived, and it was never so plainly a pressing public question.

There was never such a rattling of amazement and consternation among the dry bones of Bourbon party politics; never such a hysterical protestation upon the part of peddlers of patronage that the deluge would not be much of a shower after all; never such shuddering certainty in the minds of political money changers, that the people will presently scourge them with wrath out of the temple of liberty. Political assessments, the blackmail imposed by party freebooters upon the employés of the people, have been in great part suppressed, and have been permanently stigmatized as despicable. Arbitrary removals which were the accepted and unquestioned practice of the public service, have not ceased, indeed, but they are now instantly challenged and exposed, and there is a distinct public sense of wrong in the act and a disposition to deal rigorously with any administration which is guilty of the offence. The recent debates in Congress upon the subject of reform, the eloquent silence of many leaders, no less than the hostile speech of others; the eagerness on one side to prove falsity to reform against the other, and the recrimination that the pot when in power had been as black as it now alleged the administration kettle to be; the acrimony, the sullenness, the avoidance of the vote on one side; the banter, the accusation, and the sarcasm on the other, all showed in that assembly, which talks always with its ear turned toward the people, a universal consciousness that it was dealing with a question in which the country was profoundly interested, and which would exert a powerful influence upon the election.

It was quite right. The pricked bubble, the exploded humbug, the played out Sunday school game, the aristocratic device, the monarchical plot, the trick to retain Republicans in office, the

un-American reform, slain and thrice slain, and dead as the Bank or the Embargo, will be for the first time a leading question in the Congressional elections of this year. On one side support of the administration will mean support of reform; on the other, opposition to the administration will mean denunciation of its infidelity to reform. The democratic candidate this year need not protest the soundness of his views upon State sovereignty and a revision of the tariff, nor solemnly affirm his Jeffersonian principles, but he must announce his approval or disapproval of the President's course and so define distinctly his position upon reform. The Republican need not dilate upon protection and a gold standard, a free ballot and a fair count; but while he is faithful to Republican traditions he must declare unequivocally for appointments by proved merit, and in an open and free competition. Let the Democratic candidate who holds with Senator Vance that reform is unconstitutional and un-Democratic, and consequently that the President betrays his trust in tolerating Republicans in the Civil Service, say so frankly and appeal for judgment. Let the Republican candidate who holds with Senator Ingalls that the Civil Service is spoils, that the spoils belong to the victors, and that Republicans ought to scorn to serve the country under a Democratic administration, say with equal frankness that the President betrays his party trust if he does not turn out Republicans. If the nominating conventions should omit to secure such an expression from candidates for Congress the National Reform League will undertake to supply the omission. At last, said Wendell Phillips in 1860, after thirty years of anti-slavery agitation,—at last the slave has elected a President of the United States. In 1882 at the annual meeting of this League

it resolved that for the first time candidates for Congress should be asked to express their views upon reform; and now after a short but vigorous agitation of four years it is evident that under the necessary conditions of the election of this autumn Civil-Service reform will be a distinct issue in the election of the Congress of the United States.

It is by such facts and such a situation that the progress of reform is to be estimated. Inconsistencies and failures in the practical enforcement of the principle may be deplored, but the advance of reform itself is now beyond the control of any administration. This year or another year may be a bad year for fruit, but none the less the fruit trees are rooted fast in a kindly soil, and abundant and noble fruit is sure. The important question is not whether this or that executive officer respects the law, but whether the public mind is interested and aroused. The prosperity of reform lies in the condition of public opinion. Every good reform is a public conviction before it is a law, and the first demonstration of active and serious opposition is the unfailing sign that, in the language of religious revivals, the public mind is under conviction. In my first address before the League, four years ago, I said that the battle with the spoils system had begun in earnest. In its nature it must be an obstinate and strenuous contest. We are in the midst of it now. The very vigor of the fight shows the strength both of the reform sentiment and of the spoils tradition. We have never anticipated, I am sure, an undisputed victory. We have never supposed that we should march as on parade, with the bands playing gaily, straight across the field of battle. We know too well the power of the evil entrenched in tradition and prejudice and ignorance and fierce

party spirit to expect that the acts of any officer or the course of any administration which was not especially elected upon the reform issue and for the purpose of reform, however friendly to reform they might be, would be perfectly consistent and reasonable and free from reproach. In estimating the situation we do not accept on the one hand without qualification praise of its own administration from a party which, as a party, has shown little sympathy with the distinctive policy of the executive, nor on the other hand can we heed denunciation of the reform course of the administration proceeding from the opposition party, stimulated by party spirit for a party purpose, and not intended to promote reform.

This League is the only organized and authentic national representative of the reform sentiment. I challenge any man to show that it has in any degree or at any time betrayed the trust voluntarily assumed by it, with the approval of the locally organized friends of reform, of honestly and adequately representing that sentiment, and its criticisms and demands upon political parties and public men. The League has pandered to no personal ambition, to no party purpose. It has been no man's instrument nor has it been the organ of any faction. Upon the late party change of administration, on behalf of the friends of reform and in the public interest the League addressed the newly-elected President earnestly commending to him the interests of reform, and in a forcible, unequivocal and patriotic strain he responded, expressing the sympathy with the movement which he had practically proved as Governor of New York, pledging himself to the enforcement of the reform law in good faith, and to an observance of its spirit in selections for appointment beyond

its range. A year and five months of his administration have now passed, and the time has arrived when a general survey of its action upon this subject and of the condition of reform under his administration is practicable and desirable. The Executive Committee of the League, therefore, recently appointed a Committee of which I have the honor to be Chairman, charged with the duty of reporting, first, concerning the enforcement and operation of the National Civil-Service law : second, concerning the principles and methods followed by the administration in making appointments, removals, and suspensions : and third, concerning the progress of the reformed system in state and municipal governments. The report of the committee will naturally embrace some of the topics to which I should otherwise allude in this address. But I shall leave to that report of eminent representatives of the cause from various parts of the country to state authoritatively the judgment of the League upon the general course of the administration as affecting Civil-Service Reform.

Apart from the details of the enforcement of the law and of executive action in regard to appointments and removals, there are three chief points of interest in the reform history of the year. First, the effort in Congress to annul the national law ; second, the effort to destroy the efficiency of the State law in Massachusetts : and third, the introduction of the reform bill of Mr. Edmunds. The direct assault to repeal the national law failed in both houses of Congress. But the efforts at direct repeal were only rockets thrown up from a sinking ship. They served merely to cast a momentary light upon despair. The serious attack was of another kind. It was a proposition to make the payment of the salary of the Civil-Service Commissioners contingent upon a

change of rules by the President which would abolish competition and facilitate partisan appointment. It was an ingenious scheme to rebuke the President, to discredit the Civil-Service Commission, and to nullify the reform law. The fact that it was an attack by indirection, sure if it did not prosper to be disposed of by a point of order and without a record of the vote, showed that the leaders doubted its success. But they were willing to try the assault in order to prove their own hostility to the President and to show to their constituents that they were guiltless of reform and would gladly distribute spoils if only they could. In this last purpose the effect succeeded, but not in rebuking the President nor in discrediting the Commission.

It is unfortunate that the cunning method of the attack prevented a vote. But even had there been a unanimous adverse vote it would have shown not that the House is an assembly of reformers, but only that representatives are aware of the quality and extent of the reform sentiment in the country. How little the undoubted desire of a great and intelligent public sentiment practically and permanently to establish the reformed system really animates Congress is shown by the little tricks that the House tolerated in the appropriation bill to evade the reform law. On the 17th of June, on the motion of Mr. Randall, the House of Representatives reduced the number of clerks within the classified service in the Patent Office by thirty, and increased the number of skilled laborers at \$840 a year from sixty-two to ninety-two. The object was evident. Examinations are not held for clerkships of less than an annual value of \$900. The so-called skilled laborers of the Patent Office, though employed chiefly on clerical work, have not been treated as within the

classified service, although probably they fall within it. The amendment was passed by the House without a division, and was accepted by the Senate. Congress thus snatched a few small places out of the classified service and threw them upon the heap of spoils. The plea is that a few thousands of dollars are saved. The result is that the public service loses trained capacity, the law is evaded, the public offices are demoralized, and Congress is disgraced by a petty trick.

Such a trick would be impossible were there a sincere desire in Congress to secure reform. But there was no positive reform legislation during the session, and nothing in the action of either House showed any serious interest in the subject. Senator Hampton's bill making it a misdemeanor for a Senator or Representative to recommend or solicit appointments; Mr. Willis' to repeal the four years' law; Mr. Long's to repeal the tenure of office act; Mr. Cutcheon's for a bureau of Civil-Service appointments; Mr. Bayne's for the election of certain officers by the people; Mr. Cox's for an equitable classification and compensation of certain officers, were the other more prominent propositions affecting the Civil Service which were introduced. Some sleep in committee, some were reported, none have become laws. Whatever may be the assertion of party managers, nothing shows so conclusively that reform is in no proper sense the policy of either of the great parties as the course of Congress. No leader in either House is an aggressive Civil-Service Reformer. No Senator or Representative has proposed to extend the scope of the reform law. Congress, indeed, is plainly conscious of the public interest, and of the rapidly increasing pressure of the question. But it is both angry and bewildered. The shepherds

are in the fog and hate to try the upward path, and the sheep can only bleat plaintively for the lost pastures of patronage.

But while the negative conduct of Congress signally illustrates the indifference of party politicians, the action of one of the chief bureaus of administration in the Treasury Department happily illustrates the results of sincere, intelligent, and courageous fidelity to reform. The bureau of printing and engraving controls more patronage of places not included in the classified service than all the other Treasury bureaus combined. It has been notorious as the refuge of parasites of the most unscrupulous spoilsmen, and an investigating committee of experts in the Treasury of the same party with the chief part of the force employed in the bureau, reported a few years ago that the vicious circle of lavish appropriation and of appointment by political influence had led to the employment of a force which in some divisions was twice and in others three times as large as was necessary, and that more than half the force in the bureau might be dispensed with. Soon after his inauguration President Cleveland appointed the chairman of this committee to be chief of the bureau. During the first thirteen months of his control, ending on the first of July, there have been but seven permanent original appointments, all of which were to places that it was absolutely necessary to fill. Three persons also have been appointed in the place of relatives who had broken down in the service, and fifteen of the most deserving of the employés who had been discharged in order to reduce the force have been recalled to the service as they were needed. No person has been discharged for political reasons, or to make place for another. Since the first of March, 1885, the force of the bureau has been reduced by three

hundred persons. Of the appropriations made for its support for the fiscal year 1885 \$73,000 were returned to the Treasury unused, and there will be an estimated saving of at least \$175,000 in the appropriation for 1886; making an aggregate saving of about \$250,000 in this single branch of the Department under this administration, and all that has been done has received the most cordial support of Mr. Manning, the Secretary of the Treasury. This is Civil-Service Reform. This bureau is what every bureau in the public service might become with incalculable advantage to the country, to political morality, and to the true function of party in a republic, which is not to distribute patronage but to determine policy. But such a beneficent and remarkable administration of an office is impossible except upon the condition that happily exists in this bureau. There must be at the head of the office the same thorough belief in reform, the same ability and intelligence and courage to enforce it which distinguish the head of the Bureau of Printing and Engraving, one of the earliest and most efficient friends of reform in the country, Mr. Edward O. Graves.

I can only mention the second point, the persistent and significant effort of the Massachusetts Legislature, by an overwhelming majority, practically to repeal the reform law of that State — an effort which was eloquently and indignantly opposed by every veteran who took part in the debate, except the author of the bill, and which was happily baffled by the forcible and conclusive veto of Governor Robinson. The frank and earnest opposition of the veterans proved that it is a gross dishonor to the men who offered their lives in defense of a Union founded upon equal rights and equal laws to assert that not content with

the consciousness of duty well done, and with the national gratitude manifested in pensions, in homes and hospitals, and in friendly preference wherever preference is justifiable, they demand the repeal of equal laws carefully designed to promote the general welfare and universally acknowledged to be effective to that end. It was the veterans in the Massachusetts Legislature who opposed the repeal of the reform law, not the politicians who pressed it, who truly represented the spirit which inspired the soldier and sailor of the Union from Fort Sumter to Appomattox, from Dupont and Ward to Farragut and Porter.

The third chief incident in the annals of reform for the year is the bill recently introduced in the Senate by Senator Edmunds. It is a bill of great importance, into the general discussion of which I cannot now enter. But two of its provisions demand our most careful attention, for while this League seeks the repeal of the four years' law, the Edmunds bill proposes to re-enact it; and while the League would leave the power of removal to the appointing officer and destroy the motives for its unjust exercise, the Edmunds bill would confer that power upon the United States Judges. The passage of this bill would confirm and perpetuate one of the most mischievous abuses in the government. Miss Salmon, in her *History of the Appointing Power of the President*, is not extravagant in saying of the four years' law, "Never in the whole history of the legislation of a hundred years affecting the appointing power has so disastrous a measure been enacted." It practically places the whole body of important subordinate offices, upon which depends the vast ramification of minor employments, at the disposal of the President during his term. It enables him to change the entire force of the Civil Service

without the odium of arbitrary removal. It was, indeed, the four years' law that introduced the practice of such removals and began the sophistication and corruption of public sentiment which are revealed in the familiar assertion that a clean partisan sweep of the public service is the intentional and logical result of an election. The truth is otherwise. Mr. Randall, the biographer of Jefferson and as strong an anti-Federalist, admits that even after Jefferson's election minor offices were understood to be held upon the constitutional tenure of good conduct, and Mr. Calhoun, in 1835, states that arbitrary removals were of recent date, that is since 1820 when the four years' law was passed. Mr. Benton said truly that the expiration of the term was regarded as the creation of a vacancy to be filled by a new appointment, and in 1826, six years after the passage of the law, the select committee of the Senate recommended its repeal because the law operated against its own intent and served to turn out faithful officers instead of retaining them.

The forecast of Jefferson and Madison in regard to the mischievous results of the four years' law have been amply verified by experience. It has been one of the great bulwarks of the spoils system and has been vigorously defended by every party buccaneer. Even when there has been no party change of administration the vacation of the offices by the expiration of the term has opened the opportunity for gratifying factional feeling. In 1882 I pointed out that of 825 officers whose terms had expired in nine months of the late administration nearly half had been dropped from the service. If 825 offices, nearly one-quarter of the 3,400 or 3,500 subject to executive nomination, and filled by members of his own party, had not been vacated by law

within the space of nine months is it probable that the President would have vacated them within that time either by his own act or by an appeal to a Judge? Is it conceivable that of those 825 officers nearly one-half were unfit for their positions? Is it doubtful that the most desperate and unscrupulous of partisans in every political contest are officers who know that the chance of their own support and that of their families depends upon the result of an election. Manly independence and self-respect must be necessarily destroyed and the public service consequently demoralized by the knowledge that honesty and ability and experience and industry and efficiency will be of no avail to retain men in their employments if a party administration or the factional control of their own party should change at the end of four years. A limited term for the minor appointive offices is a direct incitement to intrigue and fraud and falsehood. It is a folly unknown in private business, and it deprives public employment of that incentive to diligence and efficiency, and destroys that mainspring of honorable self respect, the peaceful consciousness that success depends upon merit and not on favor, and that fidelity and competency are the guarantee of continued employment and promotion. After the discussions of recent years the deliberate re-enactment by Congress of the four years' law would plainly contemplate and sanction a clean sweep of the service with every party change of administration as fast as official terms should expire. The President would be invited by the law itself to reward his own partisans as every day placed offices at his disposal. The Civil Service would become, with the express approval of Congress, a mere treasury of party spoils.

The Edmunds bill is in fact a bill to enact and legitimate all

the evils of a clean sweep. Would they be obviated by the extraordinary provision of judicial suspension and removal, which is another proposition of the bill? I think not. This provision would at most prevent only the arbitrary dismissal of incumbents during their terms. But it would not affect the essential evil of a four years' law, which is automatic removal, removal by the expiry of the term. If dismissal without reason during a brief term is wrong, dismissal without reason at the end of such a term cannot be justified upon any sound business principle. Reform, as we understand it, seeks to take the whole non-political public service out of politics. But the Edmunds bill thrusts it into politics. There is nothing in the provision for judicial suspension or removal during the term which would restrain the mischief in the least degree. The service would be necessarily partisan, and a partisan service would be what it has always been, the most despotic, unscrupulous, and debasing of party machines. It is true that the present reform law leaves the executive choice beyond the classified service entirely untrammelled. But the spirit of the law forbids the abuse both of the power of removal and of appointment throughout the unclassified service, while its warmest friends seek to strengthen the reform of which it is an active agent by the repeal of the four years' law. In the situation which the Edmunds bill would invite the only restraint upon the complete prostitution of patronage to party would be the chance of a reform President. But this would be but a momentary relief, and the chance of a reform President would certainly not be increased by the unrestricted power of filling the whole public service with active personal partisans. When Madame de Stael said to the Emperor Alexander that a despotism may be bene-

ficient, he answered Yes, Madame, but it would be only a happy accident. The reform of the Civil Service must not be left to a happy accident.

But while the method of removal which the bill provides would not remedy the immense evil which the bill proposes, what would be the effect upon the discipline and efficiency of the service itself? The bill provides for removal for cause determined by judicial authority. But such a law would logically and inevitably affect the whole service. If the President could remove a postmaster only for cause satisfactory to a court of law, it would be manifestly unjust to permit the postmaster to remove a clerk without cause determined with similar care. The result would be intolerable. The right of counsel and the forms of law would be invoked, the whole legal machinery of mandamuses, injunctions, certioraris, and the rules of evidence would be put in play to displace a slovenly postmaster, or on the other hand to keep an incompetent clerk at his desk or a sleepy watchman on his beat. Cause for the removal of a small collector, or a letter carrier in the post office, or an accountant in the Custom House would be presented with all the pomp of impeachment, and established like a high crime and misdemeanor. The discipline of the service upon which its efficiency depends would be ruined. If appointing officers, from the President to the head of a bureau, were obliged to prove negligence, or insolence, or want of quickness, or any of the myriad forms of inefficiency in a subordinate as he would prove a charge of theft or arson, the officer's good nature would recoil, and there would be no removals except for offenses of which the penal law takes cognizance. The superior officers would endure much and long rather than bring a suit

against a subordinate for unpunctuality or laziness; official discipline would disappear, and the efficiency of the service would be fatally impaired. Moreover, when removal should depend upon the judgment of a court, removal would be always and justly regarded as a stigma upon character. Removal for cause, therefore, if the cause were to be decided by any authority but that of the superior officer, instead of improving would swiftly and enormously enhance the cost by ruining the efficiency of the public service, by destroying subordination and making every lazy and worthless officer or clerk twice as careless and incompetent as before.

I do not indeed forget the wanton outrages of removal in the public service, nor the unhappiness and despair which they produce. Undoubtedly the larger part of the personal suffering and injustice arising from the vicious system of treating the public service as party spoils is due to arbitrary partisan removal. This wrong is not disposed of by saying flippantly that the persons removed have had their share and ought to give way for others. This is merely pleading the absurdity known as rotation in office, which as a principle or a practice in the minor service means nothing whatever. It is a phrase implying an equal sharing of public places among the people. But there is no such thing as sharing the public places because there are not enough for all. If everybody is to be paid out of the public treasury for doing his political duty it is obviously absurd to permit anybody to be paid for four successive years. That would be a wicked monopoly. Even with a term of four months we should not all get a chance at the treasury, and the four years cormorants would evidently take the bread out of the mouths of the rest of us. If Tim is

entitled to a place because he has worked for the party so is Tom. And upon this principle of rotation if there are not places for both of them, all the Tims who are appointed ought to divide ~~their wages with all~~ the Toms for whom there are no places. When Silas Wright called rotation in office a cardinal Republican principle let us hope that he meant rotation in offices for which the constitution provides the opportunity of rotation, and not in the vast multitude of subordinate employments in which equal rotation is absolutely impossible, and in which if it were possible it would be absurd.

The doctrine of rotation in office is justified by its advocates upon two grounds : first, that there should be no vested right in office ; and second, that in public offices there is always a tendency to mere routine, which operates as a kind of dry rot of official vigor and efficiency. But both pleas vanish in a system where the power of removal is unrestricted. No man holds a vested right in public office who holds as in private business at the will of a superior, and the remedy for inefficiency lies, as in all other well-conducted business, on the responsible head of the office. When it is once determined that public business shall be transacted like private business the question of removal will need no such grotesque solution as that of the Edmunds bill. The question of removing a private book-keeper or engineer is not referred to a court of law, and when a merchant's clerk is inefficient or unsatisfactory and is consequently dismissed he does not argue before a United States Court his right to hold his place for three years or for three days longer. In re-enacting the four years' term, thereby sanctioning the abuses known as a clean sweep and partisan rotation in office, and in separating the

executive power of removal from the executive power of appointment, the bill of Mr. Edmunds violates what we believe to be cardinal conditions of thorough reform in the Civil Service.

There is one other plea for rotation in office which is the final defence of the system that makes spoils of the public service. It is asserted that our Government is a government of party, and that thorough party organization and effective party diligence would be impossible without the reward of place. It is contended that the spur of party ambition in great party leaders, in Pitt or Fox, in Clay or Calhoun, in Gladstone or Disraeli, is the desire of reaching great place to direct an imperial policy. If Clay may properly aspire to be President and claim the Presidency as a reward of illustrious party service, why should the same desire and the same claim in a small and humble degree be denied to the follower of Clay who cannot make a speech, but who can bring out the voters? This is a plausible plea, but even when sincere it totally misconceives the facts. In a free country undoubtedly political ambition is the ambition to govern, and when great questions arise and the country divides upon great policies of government those who by resistless argument and burning appeal successfully mould public opinion are naturally placed where they can make that conviction law and enforce it in administration. This is the legitimate result of the successful appeal of political leaders to the country. But neither Clay nor Van Buren nor any other American citizen could claim the Presidency on any ground whatever, and to argue that a man who brings out the voters and "treats the boys" and "runs the machine" should be set to appraising muslins, or weighing spices, or keeping books in a public office upon the same principle that a

party leader is called to organize the measures of the policy which he has proposed and which the country has approved, is to insult the public common sense.

The legitimate and healthy contest of parties in a republic is not to be deprecated. It is the controversy of principles, the argument of policies, the great contention to which the political genius of the English-speaking race especially inclines. But patronage destroys legitimate party action, and the reckless party spirit, against which Washington bequeathed us his last and most solemn warning, constantly strives to substitute personal and private ends for public purposes, and to make party contest a struggle for the public money in the emoluments of petty place instead of a great appeal to the country for a public policy. Thus the spoils system instead of promoting the just objects of party degrades and demoralizes party itself, and destroys its true function. To say that the distribution of non-political places as rewards among a few parasites of politicians whom the parasites hold in higher place, is essential to party, is false because it destroys the legitimate reason of party. But to plead that it is indispensable to general and active interest in politics is to argue against facts and experience as well as against reason.

The first great party change of administration in our own history followed the election of Jefferson. In less than ten years this party had prevailed over the party of Washington and Jay and Hamilton, and was thoroughly organized, enthusiastic, and triumphant. But it had advanced to national supremacy, not only without the control of the patronage, but without the hope of it. Not only had it no such excuse for assessing or such means of disciplining its members, but there was no promise or

general expectation of obtaining place by a clean sweep of Federal office-holders. "Some removals," said Jefferson, "I know must be made. They must be as few as possible, done gradually, and bottomed on some malversation or inherent disqualification. Good men to whom there is no objection but a difference of political opinion, practised on only so far as the right of a private citizen will justify, are not proper subjects of removal." These were Jeffersonian principles. They are absolutely and directly opposed to the Jacksonian principle, to the victors belong the spoils of the enemy. These are the principles of Washington as well as Jefferson; the principles of true Democracy not in the party sense but in that sense in which every true American is a Democrat. Reform in the first party change of administration did not mean turning out honest and efficient postmasters, and night watchmen and messengers as rascals. It meant strict construction of the Constitution, restriction of national powers, the fostering of State sovereignty, reduction of taxes, and economy and simplicity in government. It did not mean a clean sweep of minor places, for there were fewer places upon the national register when Jefferson was inaugurated than there are now upon that of the New York Custom House alone. That single fact proves the absurd untruth of the assertion that the prospect of spoils is the spring of party activity.

The election which just aroused and shaken the British Empire from sea to sea, and which the *London Times* said was to determine the most momentous issue ever decided by a general election in England, is a signal illustration of the legitimate contest of party. It was a tremendous controversy upon a great national question. Every intelligent Englishman,

and Scotchman, and Irishman was as earnestly interested in that election as every patriotic American was absorbed in the great contentions that preceded and accompanied our war for the Union. The whole world watched the conflict and anticipated with eagerness the result. Does any American suppose that it was a struggle for the post offices, and that it would have been a very languid election except for the prospect of small clerkships, messengerships, and a clean sweep? Mr. Gladstone answered him long ago, "We limit to a few scores of persons the removals and appointments on these occasions," and again, "We have abandoned that power (of filling the minor places), we have thrown every one of them open to competition," and he adds: "And in order that the public service might be, indeed, the public service; in order that we might not have among the civil officers of the State that which we complained of in the army, namely, that the service was not the property of the nation but of the officers, we have now been enabled to remove the barriers of nomination, patronage, jobbing, favoritism in whatever form; and every man belonging to the people of England, if he so please to fit his children for the position of competing for places in the public service, may do it entirely irrespective of the question what is his condition in life, or the amount of means with which he may happen to be or not to be blessed."

These words describe the great purpose of this League, a purpose which with every day is more widely approved by the country, and is therefore constantly nearer accomplishment. There is nothing so essentially Republican, nothing so distinctively Democratic as Civil-Service Reform. The measures which

the practical progress of reform now requires are the rapid and steady extension of the classified service into every branch of the administration to which its principles properly apply ; the repeal of the four years' law and the summary removal of officers who evade or defy the letter or the spirit of the reform law, or interfere in nominations and elections. The unmistakable evidence of determined purpose in the superior officer is felt by every cabin boy on the ship, every private in the ranks, and it is the most effective moral tonic, whether in an actual battle or in the peaceful controversies of reform. Every man, whether in public place or in private life, who believes that a thorough correction of the dangerous abuses of patronage is indispensable, and who holds that a system of the public service which was wise and practicable under President Washington is practicable and wise under President Cleveland or any other President, but who comprehends also the necessary bitterness and tenacity of the contest in which we are engaged, may well ponder the remark of the Yankee to his antagonist, "Wal, I 'spose you're pretty ugly, but I cal'late I'm a darned site uglier." If there is any cabin boy on our ship, or any private in our ranks, who is not full of that spirit and who does not already hear the bugles of victory in his heart, I do not know where to look for him.

At the close of this address the delegates withdrew to the parlors of the church.

The meeting having been called to order by the President, Mr. Schurz moved that the Secretary be instructed to deposit one

ballot for Mr. George William Curtis for President of the League for the ensuing year. The motion was unanimously adopted and Mr. Curtis was formally declared elected.

The Treasurer's report was then presented and read by the Secretary as follows:

1885.

July 16. BALANCE as per account rendered \$ 785.08

RECEIPTS.

Amount received for documents,	\$149.22	
" " " contributions,	407.50	
" " " special contributions,	713.00	1269.72
		<hr/>
		\$2054.80

DISBURSEMENTS.

Amount paid Stenographer,	\$175.30	
" " for Printing,	534.73	
" " for Stamps and Stamped Envelopes,	398.70	
Amount paid Alex'r. Fullerton, for services rendered,	300.00	
Amount paid Rent Meeting Room,	20.00	
" " Expressage,	1.60	
" " Petties,	.35	1430.68
		<hr/>
Balance on hand this date,		\$624.12
Balance Hemmenway Fund,	\$587.76	
" General Fund,	36.36	
		<hr/>
		\$624.12

E & O E

New York, July 28, 1886.

IRA BURSLEY,

Treasurer.

The report was received and the President appointed Messrs. Comstock, Wood and Hobart a committee to examine and audit it.

The Secretary reported verbally that the main work of the office during the past year had been a continuance of the effort to disseminate information concerning the principles and purposes of the League and to stimulate the formation of local associations. To aid in this effort contributions had been solicited from individuals to a special fund, which had been expended in the printing and distribution of documents, and in the prosecution of a very extensive correspondence with individuals, especially in the West and South. This correspondence had developed much interest in the movement in which the League is engaged, but had also shown great ignorance in many sections of the country, and it had not resulted as yet in a very large accession to the organized strength of the League. The new associations of which the Secretary had been informed, are located at Indianapolis and Bloomington in Indiana, and at Greenville and Detroit in Michigan, the first named being a State Association having Corresponding Secretaries in various parts of the State, and the last named being reported to have about 2000 members, and to be very active.

The Secretary expressed his regret that local associations frequently fail to keep him informed of their work and of the progress of the reform, and urged the importance of intercommunication and mutual support on the part of the various local bodies.

For the purpose of making a proper record in the report of the proceedings of this meeting, he stated that at the last meeting of the Executive Committee of the League, a special committee was appointed to examine and report upon the administration of the Civil Service laws of the United States and of the several states having such laws, which committee consisted of Messrs. George William Curtis, Chairman, Carl Schurz, Wayne MacVeagh, Charles J. Bonaparte, Charles R. Codman, Charles Claffin Allen and William Potts.

Reports from the several associations were then called for. From Missouri Hon. Charles Claflin Allen reported that the association was fortunate in having the active assistance of able men from both parties. During the year they had introduced into the legislature a bill designed to effect reforms in the State and Municipal Governments, and though they had failed to pass it, they were well pleased with the attention which it had attracted, and should follow up the movement until success shall have crowned their efforts. It might be said that they reported progress and asked leave to sit again. Mr. Allen assured the League that the interest and determination of the members of the Missouri Association was as strong, if possible stronger, than ever.

From Philadelphia, Mr. R. Francis Wood reported that the association had kept a watchful eye upon the operations under the National Reform law in that city, and had had occasion to interrogate public officers and to communicate with the administration regarding the same. In April next a State law recently passed will come into operation in the Municipal Service and the association is prepared to supervise closely the action of the authorities thereunder.

From Maryland, Mr. Charles J. Bonaparte reported that the association having headquarters in Baltimore had been kept busy in combatting efforts (which had been more or less successful) to defeat the intentions of those whose urgency compelled the passage of the National Reform law, and in opposing appointments to positions outside of the classified service, of persons whom they deemed wholly unfit for public officers. "They had certainly made enough noise, and if the general progress of reform throughout the State had taken two steps backward for every one forward, it certainly was not due to the indifference of the Maryland Civil-Service Reform Association. They had tried to make the federal administration live up to its pledges, at least to their moderate expectations of it; but Mr. Bonaparte thought that in view of the past year's experience, their expectations would be still more

moderate the coming year. The association has shown one thing, that if it can do nothing else, it can make itself exceedingly disagreeable to the spoilsmen, and to that extent we have been successful." The speaker had received incontrovertible testimony that 'we are a very considerable nuisance to the Maryland spoilsmen,' and he thought that wherever on barren soil small civil-service reform associations were organized, the truth could at least be spread by worrying the spoilsmen and making them feel uncomfortable. As a result of some of their activity they had lost a little in membership, but this loss was more than offset by the better quality of new recruits. Mr. Bonaparte called especial attention to the "Civil-Service Reformer" the monthly periodical which the association had continued to publish to the great irritation of those opposed to the reform movement. A libel suit had been threatened by some of those offended, a fact which the association claimed to be a testimonial to the effectiveness of its attacks, but no such suit had yet been commenced.

From Massachusetts, Mr. James P. Tolman reported that the efforts of the State League and of the various local associations had been largely concentrated upon opposition to the "Tobin bill" which proposed to relieve veterans from any examination under the Civil-Service Rules. They had succeeded in obtaining a very strong expression against the purpose of this bill from veterans as well as civilians, but had failed to prevent its passage by both houses of the Legislature. It had, however, been vetoed by the Governor in a very clear and strong message. Mr. Tolman stated that a member of the Newton Association, Mr. Leverett Saltonstall, had been appointed Collector of Customs at Boston by President Cleveland, and had since taken occasion to reaffirm his devotion to the principles of the association to which he should be faithful in the administration of the office.

From Brooklyn, Mr. William G. Low, reported the measures taken by that association in conjunction with the New York Association to defeat a veterans' exemption bill, and a bill which pro-

posed to submit to a popular vote the question whether the State Civil-Service Commission should be abolished and the Civil-Service law should be repealed. In regard to the former matter they had succeeded in defeating the bald proposition and in confining the modification of the law to a provision giving an absolute preference above others to veterans passing the examinations, substantially in the order of their merit, and had reason to believe that the veterans organizations would join in opposing any further modification of the law. In the other matter they had argued that the only proper method of submitting the question to a popular vote, would be by a proposition for a Constitutional Amendment making permanent the reformed system. The force of this suggestion had been recognized and the crude bill under discussion had been withdrawn, without however the substitution of another in its stead.

An effort had been made by the new municipal authorities in Brooklyn to obtain very great modifications of the Civil-Service Rules, but the State Commission has given its approval to only some slight changes.

From Norwich, Gen. William A. Aiken reported that the association at that place has recently shown but little activity. A plan for the special consideration of local matters, which promised to elicit the sympathy and active aid of a considerable number of citizens was under discussion and vigorous efforts would doubtless be made during the coming year throughout the State.

From Indiana, Hon. William D. Foulke reported that the association had been very recently organized, but that it had enlisted for the war. There is very little Civil-Service reform sentiment in Indiana, and the experience of the association had been much the same as that of the Maryland Association. Mr. Foulke did not at this time go largely into detail regarding the administration of the National Civil-Service law in the Indianapolis post-office but stated his belief that there had been grave irregularities there. He had introduced into the State Legislature a bill relating to the Civil

Service of the State, modelled largely upon the New York law, which however had as yet failed of passage. Mr. Foulke urged especially the importance of interesting the rank and file of the voters "the plain common people" in the movement. In closing, he stated that two investigations were now in progress in relation to the management of certain public offices, the results of which, to be published at no very distant date, would be very useful in extending a knowledge of the importance of our work.

The conference then adjourned until afternoon.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

The League reconvened in private session at 3:15 o'clock P. M.

On behalf of the Special Committee of Seven on the Administration of the Civil-Service laws, Mr. Curtis reported that a large amount of material had been collected, but that much of it had been so recently received that it had been impossible for the several members of the committee to examine it and prepare a report embodying the results of such examination. He suggested that the committee be continued with instructions to complete the report and at their discretion to make public their conclusions without further consultation with the League.

Mr. Leaming moved that the report of progress be accepted, and the committee be continued with power as suggested. Mr. Wheeler moved to amend, that the report when ready be submitted to the Executive Committee. The amendment was accepted and the motion as amended was adopted.

The committee on resolutions appointed by the General Committee, and consisting of Messrs. E. P. Wheeler, Wm. A. Aiken, P. Richards, Arthur Hobart and Morrill Wyman, Jr., unanimously reported a statement of the principles and the judgment of the League, which was read by the Secretary.

Mr. Eyre moved that the report be accepted and that the resolutions be considered separately. The motion was adopted. The discussion which followed was frank and general. The following resolution, being a part of the report of the Committee, after a very full consideration, was referred to the Special Committee of seven, as being not properly in order unless the findings of that committee should seem to make appropriate the statements which it contains :

“ We received with satisfaction the declaration of the President of the United States that he would administer his office with fidelity to these principles and we have watched with confidence and appreciation his struggle against the opposition of spoilsmen in both parties to be faithful to these declarations. The more complete that fidelity, the more entire will be the confidence and support of the people to whom these principles are justly dear, because they are the natural outgrowth of American freedom.

“ We have seen with regret that many appointments to and removals from offices, especially those not within the classified service, have apparently been made in violation of these principles upon the advice or at the solicitation of members of Congress, and we therefore urge the passage of one of the bills introduced in the Senate of the United States, prohibiting senators and representatives in Congress from taking part in solicitation for public office, unless requested by the President.”

The remainder of the report of the Committee, after some slight amendments, was adopted, as follows :

First. We declare our adherence to the following principles :

1. Appointment for merit only.
2. Merit to be ascertained wherever practicable by open competitive examination and tested by probation.
3. No removals for partisan reasons or merely to make places for others.

Second. We regard with satisfaction the recent circular of the President, warning the employés of the government against undue political activity, because it is the public pledge of a sincere and courageous chief executive, that so far as depends upon him, this gross abuse and public wrong shall cease.

Third. We ask the President to extend the application of the Civil-Service rules to the District of Columbia, to the Postal Mail Service, to the Mint Service, to the clerical force of the Indian service, to other offices where a smaller number of clerks than fifty is employed, and as much farther as may be practicable, for the reason that open competitive examinations provide a better way to ascertain the qualifications of applicants for office than secret recommendations from irresponsible persons.

Fourth. We ask the Senate of the United States hereafter to consider nominations to office in open session, so that the people may know the reasons for the appointment or rejection of their servants.

Fifth. Public officers entrusted with the power of appointment and removal should be required by law or executive order to put upon public record in every case of removal the reasons therefor. Appointing officers when in the exercise of their discretion, they do not select those rated highest on the eligible lists presented to them, should be required in each case to file their reasons for such action.

Sixth. The acts which limit the tenure of subordinate offices to four years should be repealed. We would regard the recognition of fixed terms in public offices and employments for which they are not prescribed by law, as a step backward in the exercise of executive power, involving a deplorable demoralization of the public service.

Seventh. The examiners of applicants for office should be as far as practicable independent of the appointing power, and

should in part be selected from persons not holding other offices. Examinations should be practical and adapted to ascertain fitness for each particular place.

Eighth. The purposes of the Civil-Service Act can be best attained by a rigid adherence to the letter and spirit of the law by all persons charged with its execution. We protest against laxity or evasion in its administration as even more dangerous than its open violation.

Ninth. These principles are applicable to town and municipal as well as to the Federal and State Governments, and we welcome the progress that has been made in their application in New York, Boston, Brooklyn, Philadelphia, and other cities.

On motion the resolutions were then adopted as a whole.

On motion of Mr. Eaton, the following was unanimously adopted as an additional declaration :

Tenth. That the National Civil-Service Law should be so amended as to prohibit the demand of political assessments of a public officer by any person whatever.

In the course of the discussion upon the proposition that "removals should be made for inefficiency or misconduct only" the following interesting debate took place.

Mr. Rose, of Indiana, objected to the clause. "If," he said, "removals are to be for misconduct only, that involves a trial and judicial investigation. My own opinion would be that the clause should be stricken out absolutely. The strong point of this association has always been, I think, that its principles applied only to appointments, and that no superior officer is in any way restricted from dismissing an employee against whom he has even a suspicion of wrong. If the temptation to improper appointments is taken away there will be no improper removals."

Mr. Wheeler replied that no one could believe more firmly than himself in the principle that the power of removal should be

unrestricted. What the committee wanted to express was their condemnation of removals made for other reasons than for cause. The resolution was intended to express the idea that "while it would be unwise to limit the power of removal by statute, yet it is desirable by public sentiment to condemn removals, made for partisan purposes merely, or in order to make room for others who are more acceptable for political reasons." In the resolutions adopted a year ago the League recognized that some removals made were unwise; and all were satisfied, Mr. Wheeler thought, that many removals since made were unwise. That being so, it has seemed to the committee advisable to express in the first brief statement of the points on which we are agreed some proposition in regard to this particular subject of removals.

Mr. Schurz said that though the reform associations had in most cases confined their attention to the regulation of appointments, it would, in his judgment, be going too far to say that it is not the business of reformers to inquire into removals at all. We had gone through an experience in the last year, he said, that had been an interesting one so far as removals are concerned. Attempts had been made by appointing officers to circumvent the law; and these would have been less numerous if the officers had been obliged to give reasons for their action. "I would," he said, "leave to the appointing officer the entire discretion of removing his subordinates, but I would in all cases oblige him to put the reasons on record." The reasons would fall under either *misconduct* or *inefficiency*. The time had come, Mr. Schurz thought, when we should divest ourselves of the idea that the reform movement has nothing to do with removals.

Mr. Eaton agreed entirely with the view that the scope of reform should be treated as extending to removals. It should extend to all abuses that are connected with the administration of the civil service. So that with him the question was one of timeliness or expediency. Whatever resolutions were passed would be interpreted as having a definite reference to this administration;

and inasmuch as a great many removals had been made so that prominence had been given to the subject, the League was in condition to speak with more safety and more positiveness than it could a year ago. In his opinion, then, this was a fit time to say something on the subject.

The word "inefficiency" as contained in the resolution was probably broad enough to include the case of a superannuated person. The word "misconduct" he did not think aptly chosen, for there were precedents to establish that misconduct means misconduct *in office*. For example, if an official should be intoxicated on the street, this would not be misconduct within the meaning of a statute providing that removals should be made only for misconduct in office. Moreover we should not use language that could be interpreted in a sense that was not meant. There was danger, especially in the West, that by such a declaration on the subject, the meaning would be tortured into a resolve for a permanent tenure of office. The politicians would take it as intending no removals at all. Mr. Eaton suggested, therefore, that the condemnation be of "removals for partisan reasons or for the purpose of making place for another." This would cover as much ground as was needful to cover, for our purpose would be a basis on which all reformers can build as broadly as they please, and would not be open to any objections.

Mr. Schurz suggested that the phrase be: "removals only for reasons affecting the private or official character of the officer."

Mr. Bonaparte suggested: "removals should not be made except for causes rendering the incumbent in the opinion of the appointing power unsuitable for the place he occupies." The views expressed by the others seemed to Mr. Bonaparte to rest on a misapprehension of the principle. "It appears to be assumed," said he, "that it is intended to vest in somebody else than the appointing power the right of determining what is misconduct, or inefficiency, or unsuitability for further appointment. I do not think we want to say that. I think we want to authorize every

executive officer, when he can say that a person is in the interest of the public no longer suitable for the place, to remove him. But we do not wish him to use this power of removal as an excuse for gratifying personal animosity, for furthering partisan ends, etc."

Mr. Foulke thought Mr. Bonaparte's suggestion would not cover the case and might be subject to great perversion.

Mr. Rosengarten asked Mr. Eaton what the method of removal is in England.

Mr. Eaton replied that there is no tribunal to pass on the question of inefficiency or misconduct, except the superior officer. Records are kept and no man is removed except for cause recorded.

Mr. Schurz said that we should be governed by our experience. If it is found that by sticking to methods of appointment alone, we do not accomplish the end in view, we should then emphasize our opinion about the power of removal. Facility of removing officers has encouraged those who want to violate the law in doing so.

Mr. Eaton, in answer to a question asked by Mr. Low, explained that the present law prohibited removals only on two grounds: it provided that no one should be removed for refusing to contribute to a political fund, or to render political service. We would be asked if those were the only reasons for removal that we condemn; and we had a right to explain that they are not. Mr. Eaton thought, therefore, that the League should go as far as to declare its opposition to removals for partisan reasons or for the purpose of making place for another.

Mr. Welsh said that so far as the Indian service was concerned, it certainly was important that something be done to limit the power of removal. Had there been some such limitation, the grave evils that we are now suffering from in that department would not exist.

Mr. Tolman favored the simple declaration that "no re-

removals should be made for partisan reasons or for the purpose of making vacancies."

Mr. Eaton said that removals were not made for the purpose of making *vacancies*, but in order to get others in.

Others joined in the debate at some length, after which the Chair put the question on Mr. Eaton's amendment, and declared the same carried, with one or two dissenting voices. Then the third clause, as amended, was adopted unanimously.

The Auditing Committee reported that it had compared the account of the Treasurer with the vouchers submitted, and found it correct.

Mr. Wheeler moved as follows:

Resolved, That the Secretary be instructed to transmit copies of the foregoing resolutions to the various associations, with a request that they use all practicable means to awaken public sentiment to their support, and to use their influence to secure the carrying into effect of the measures advocated in the resolutions.

The motion was adopted.

A vote of thanks to the Trustees of the Channing Memorial Church was then unanimously adopted, and the conference adjourned.

In the evening a large number of the delegates dined together at the Ocean House, and addresses on matters related to the movement for reform were delivered by Mr. Curtis, Senator Foulke, Gen. Osborn, Senator Adams, Messrs. E. P. Wheeler, Chas. Theodore Russell, Jr., and Dorman B. Eaton, Col. Chas. R. Codman, General Aiken and Mr. Low.

Attest,

WILLIAM POTTS,

Secretary.

